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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

**RURAL LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY:
The Case of Plaatjie, Eastern Cape Province**

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A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfilment* of the requirements for the award of the degree
of Master of Arts (MA) in Sociology

Supervisor: Dr Frank Matose



COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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ABSTRACT

South Africa is food secure at the national level. However, that does not automatically mean that every household has sufficient access to nutritionally adequate food. Food insecurity remains a reality for many South African households, particularly those situated in the rural areas. Households in Plaatjie are plagued by a severe lack of infrastructure, a lack of local employment opportunities, and crippling administrative inefficiency. These circumstances, coupled with the fact that these households are net purchasers of food, generates increased vulnerability to shocks and stressors (such as food price inflation), placing them at greater risk of livelihood and food insecurity as their capacity to cope and recover is diminished. Livelihood diversification is the name of the game, and government social assistance in the form of welfare grants has become the primary source of income for the majority. Subsistence agriculture is now but a secondary source of food in a once historically agricultural community. Almost no trade in agricultural produce occurs, and thus very little income is derived from this practice. Natural resource use is prevalent, with marine resources playing a particularly important role in the livelihoods of many Plaatjie households. Through conducting semi-structured interviews with residents, using the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework as guideline, this thesis has discovered that while chronic food insecurity may not be rife in the area, many households are vulnerable to periodic food insecurity, as no security of livelihood exists. An overwhelming dependence on welfare grants, coupled with a decrease in subsistence agricultural practices, and little to no extension services, compound the issue of vulnerability. While the initial aim of this thesis was to explore food in/security, welfare grants are where the real story lies.

Keywords:

Food security, vulnerability, Eastern Cape, rural livelihoods, Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, natural resource use, welfare, grants.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This thesis seeks to investigate the manner in which rural households in Plaatjie, a coastal village located in the former homelands of the Transkei, address food security. Plaatjie is a sub-locality of Ntubeni, one of seven Community Property Associations (CPAs) adjacent to – and the rightful owners of – the Dwesa-Cwebe Nature and Marine Reserve. Located in South Africa's 'Most Vulnerable' local municipality (Mbhashe), Dwesa-Cwebe is plagued by a severe lack of infrastructure and employment opportunities, as well as administrative inefficiency. By exploring the livelihood activities these households adopt, the researcher examines the various ways in which income and food are secured. Using the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) as conceptual framework, the researcher is able also to highlight the structures and processes that influence livelihood (and thus food) security, whether negatively or positively. While these households may have food on their tables at the best of times, they are by no means food secure when using the working definition of food security adopted by the South African Government in its Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS). Chapter 1 will introduce the main concepts that inform this thesis, as well as the context within which it is situated, following which the chapter will address the aims and objectives, the problem statement and research questions, limitations encountered, and the methodology and research design. The chapter will close with an outline of the rest of the thesis.

1.1 Food Security

Food security is a global issue. The heightened interest in food security arose in response to increasing food and oil prices, which affect net buyers of food such as the urban and rural poor (Hart, 2009). These increases are expected to continue over the next decade. The result, claim the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), will be that poor households will be forced to allocate more of their expenditure to food, which relates to a decrease in the quality of food consumed. This, in turn, leads to insufficient caloric

intake and often malnutrition and hunger. Furthermore, it also results in less disposable income to service other cash needs. “Inadvertently”, claims Hart, “some of these households will have to sell off some or all of their assets in order to procure food at higher prices” (2009: 7). Such action results in a depleted asset base, making households more vulnerable to food insecurity.

1.1.1 Food Security in South Africa

Although South Africa is considered food secure at the national level, more than a third of its population (particularly low-income households in rural areas) are said to be vulnerable to food insecurity. As many households increasingly rely on purchased foods, they are vulnerable to food inflation spikes and crises that cut household income (Aphane, Dzivakwi and Jacobs, 2010). Food security ought to be a priority policy issue for South Africa, as the South African Constitution “dictates the need to reduce and, if possible, eliminate vulnerability to and the negative consequences of food insecurity within South Africa” (de Klerk, Drimie, Aliber, Mini, Mokoena, Randela, Modiselle, Vogel, de Swardt and Kirsten, 2004: 3).

Food security is enshrined in the South African Constitution. Section 27 states that “every citizen has the right to have access to sufficient food and water”, and that “the state must by legislation and other measures, within its available resources, avail to progressive realisation of the right to sufficient food” (cited in The Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa, Department of Agriculture, 2002: 5). As such, South Africa has developed a national Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) in an attempt to reduce hunger and poverty by 2015 (in line with Millennium Development Goal 1). The vision of the IFSS is “to attain universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (p. 6). This is also the definition of Food Security adopted by FAO (2001), as well as the working definition adopted for this thesis.

The IFSS (while admittedly not exclusively focused on agriculture) does declare that its primary objective is “to overcome rural food insecurity by increasing the participation of food insecure households in productive agriculture sector activities” (IFSS, 2002, cited in de

Klerk *et al.*, 2004: 3). However, de Klerk *et al* (*Ibid*) highlight that the issue is not essentially agricultural, but has more to do with total household income. The authors' state that,

“while it is certainly true that agriculture has played an important historical role in putting food on the table for low-income households, that it continues to do so and that it could indeed contribute more than it presently does, it is [nevertheless] essential to premise policy on a clear understanding that household food security is primarily a function of total household income, however derived, and much less a function of the food that individual households produce for their own consumption” (*Ibid*: 4).

This researcher found this to be the case in Plaatjie, where the majority of food consumed by households is purchased. While households continue to pursue subsistence agriculture, this is done as a secondary source of food and no longer as a primary source (an issue highlighted by Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009). The IFSS acknowledges that food security is a multidimensional phenomenon. However, as it was consigned to the Department of Agriculture (DoA), many are under the impression that food security is about agricultural production.

De Klerk *et al* go on to claim that most South African households, even those in rural areas, are “net deficit food producers” (2004; 3), not to mention that for many of the 1.2 million households in the communal areas, agriculture has become “a residual activity conducted after most other activities necessary for the functioning of a household have been completed” (*Ibid*). (This is not to imply that agriculture is not important to the functioning of households in these areas. Rather, it implies that the nature of agricultural production in communal areas has changed significantly, as households have entered the capitalist wage-labour market). The authors therefore recommend that public resources geared towards promoting agriculture, as a contribution to the food security status of low income households, “be carefully balanced against alternative approaches, such as boosting welfare grants or delivering more food parcels, both indispensable *short-term* measures” (*Ibid*, own emphasis added). Since the publication of this article¹ welfare grants have increased substantially, and are now a major contributor to the promotion of food security among

¹Entitled ‘Food Security in South Africa: Key Policy Issues for the Medium term’, de Klerk *et al.* (2004).

rural households. However, as the aforementioned authors have stated, this is a short-term measure and (at least in this researchers opinion) not a sustainable, long-term solution. The question of how to reduce vulnerability to food insecurity inevitably becomes one of how to promote secure and sustainable livelihoods. There is a need, therefore, to widen the analysis from food to livelihood security. The sustainable livelihoods framework is valuable here, and has been chosen as the conceptual framework to guide this research.

1.2 Sustainable Livelihoods

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) recognise that food security entails the economic, social and environmental sustainability of livelihood systems. To achieve food security requires targeted support that needs to be based on an adequate understanding of how people live and make a living (Thematic Brief on Food Security and Livelihoods, FAO, 2008). The sustainable livelihoods framework helps make clear the different factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities and shows how they relate to one another. Central to this framework is that different households have different access to livelihood assets, which the poor must often make trade-offs and choices about. Livelihood strategies and outcomes are not just dependent on access to assets or constrained by the vulnerability context, but also transformed by the environment of structures and processes (Serrat, 2008). Thus, what are required are not universal prescriptions, but context-specific approaches, as not all communities or households are homogenous. Vulnerability and food insecurity are functions, claims Hart (2009), of a households' exposure to stressors and its ability to cope with these. Different households have different access to different assets, and they are also faced with different environmental, social and cultural dynamics, and thus may engage in vastly different livelihood activities, which produce different livelihood outcomes.

1.3 The Context – Poverty and Livelihoods

1.3.1 The South African Situation

The legacy of apartheid has created widespread social and economic deprivation, extreme inequalities and poverty in South Africa. However, the advent of democracy in 1994 saw

major political and economic policy shifts, with a large part of national, provincial and local government budgets going towards job creation, service delivery, enhancing the productive capacity of the economy, and aiding the poor (Labadarios, Davids, Mchiza and Weir-Smith, 2009: 11). Social assistance (welfare grants), for example, increased from R10 billion to R37.1 billion between 1994 and 2004, with beneficiaries growing from 2.6 million to 7.9 million over the same period (Chopra, Witten and Drimie, 2009: 14). In 2010/11, it was estimated that R89 billion would be spent on grants, assisting around one quarter of the people of South Africa, making this the second biggest part of government expenditure. By 2012, government was preparing to expend over R110 billion in welfare to its citizens. South Africa is considered an upper-middle income country (Labadarios *et al.*, 2009: 11). It has an economy that consists of both a modern financial and industrial sector (with a well-supported infrastructure) and an informal subsistence sector (which receives little to no support). Yet, in spite of the mounting financial and industrial sectors, South Africa “continues to be plagued by poverty, unemployment and, more recently, steep food and fuel prices, high energy tariffs and increasing interest rates [all of which] have placed severe pressure on ordinary South Africans already struggling to meet their basic household needs” (Labadarios *et al.*, 2009: 11). South Africa’s Gini Co-efficient (63.6% in 2011) makes it one of the most unequal economies in the world, and this inequality gap continues to grow, creating greater dependence on the state among the poor.

According to Baiphethi and Jacobs (2009), in the past it was easy to distinguish between rural and urban households’ food access, in the sense that rural households produced most of their own food, whereas urban households purchased most of their food. However, recent studies have shown that dependence on market purchases, on the part of both urban and rural households, has increased substantially. Such reliance on purchased food leaves these households more vulnerable to inflation and other crises that diminish household income (Aphane *et al.*, 2010). Subsistence food production is increasing “*as a fallback* against a backdrop of inflation and proliferating cash needs” (Baiphethi and Jacobs, 2009: 13, own emphasis added). Rural farmers continue to pursue agriculture for household consumption. However, not as a *main* source of food and income, but rather as an *extra* source of food (*Ibid*).

Furthermore, as Shackleton, Shackleton and Cousins (2001) remind us, rural households are still highly dependent on wild natural resources for a range of basic living requirements. “Although cash from urban and government sources is the mainstay of the rural economy in many areas,” claim the authors, “the multiple and diverse livelihood base of rural households is not widely recognised” (p. 581). Products derived from land-based livelihood activities have a direct-use value to households, but their contribution to the national economy is poorly understood which partly explains their low profile with national policy-makers (*Ibid*: 593).

1.3.2 The Eastern Cape and the Transkei

Rural communities in the ‘former homelands’ of the Transkei are plagued by a severe lack of infrastructure, a shortage of local employment opportunities and thus high levels of migration (the Eastern Cape has the highest level of migration of any Province in the country²), as well as grossly inadequate educational and health facilities, not to mention probably the worst administrative inefficiency in the country.

According to *The South African Index of Multiple Deprivation* (Wright and Noble, 2009³), the Eastern Cape (EC) Province has the highest proportion of the population living in households that are income and/or materially deprived⁴, as well as the highest rate of employment deprivation⁵, and the second highest proportion of the population experiencing living environment deprivation⁶. Mbhashe Local Municipality (under which the administration of the study area falls) is rated the fourth most deprived local municipality (LM) in SA. Furthermore, in the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) report *State of Local Government in South Africa* (2009), Mbhashe LM is rated as the most vulnerable LM in SA, differentiated according to functionality, socio-economic profile and backlog status (excluding financial performance).

²Statistics South Africa, 2010.

³Based on data from the 2007 Community Survey.

⁴I.E. the proportion of the population living in a household with low income and/or without a refrigerator and/or without a television and radio.

⁵I.E. the proportion of the working age population (18-65 years) involuntarily excluded from employment (unemployed or unable to work due to illness/disability).

⁶I.E. the proportion of people living in a household without piped water and/or without adequate toilet and/or without electricity for lighting and/or that is a shack and/or that is crowded divided by the total population.

It is therefore not surprising that Greg Ruiters calls the EC the “most stressed” and the “most deprived” province in South Africa (2011: 1). Because the EC inherited the two ‘former homelands’ of the Ciskei and the Transkei, Bantustans with “the poorest populations, the most burdens and the worst structural problems of the country” (*Ibid*: 29), it was from its birth “the poorest, least resourced and most administratively weak of all the provinces” (*Ibid*: 8).

According to the *General Household Survey* of 2009 (StatsSA), 21.4 % of households in the EC have either ‘severely inadequate’ or ‘inadequate’ access to food, and 92.6 % of the agricultural production of households in the province is for household consumption, not the market. Furthermore, 26.4 % of households in the EC claim that welfare grants are their primary source of income. The EC is also the province with the lowest percentage of households with a connection to the mains electricity supply (69.8 %) and the poorest access to piped water (75 % of households). Those most adversely affected are usually the rural poor, in particular women, the elderly and young children. Furthermore, the EC has the third largest number of HIV-positive people in the country, and the epidemic continues to grow rapidly (Nicolay, 2008: 4). HIV/AIDS is known to have an adverse effect on the food security status of households (de Klerk *et al*, 2004: 3).

All these factors make the EC Province in general, and the Mbhashe LM in particular, a challenging – if not extremely important – research location for a study on livelihood and food security, as such infrastructural and institutional constraints are bound to affect the livelihoods of this population. The thesis therefore seeks also to highlight the structures and processes that affect livelihood security, whether positively or negatively.

1.3.3 Dwesa-Cwebe

Communities surrounding the Dwesa-Cwebe Marine and Nature Reserve have historically been subjected to various, unpopular state interventions creating an atmosphere of hostility and distrust of the government. Communal access to the reserve was closed in 1976, and this exclusion extended to the sea in 1991. After various requests for access to grazing within the reserve were ignored, a mass gathering in 1994 turned into invasion of the reserve and resources were illegally pillaged. Negotiations ensued, and a successful land

claim resulted in the restoration of 'ownership' and 'control' of the Dwesa-Cwebe Nature and Marine Reserve to the adjacent resident communities, restoring access to the protected area (although restricted) to residents. Full title to the communal land and a Deed of Settlement were secured, by which the Dwesa-Cwebe Land Trust took control of the Protected Area in 2001. The trust 'owns' and 'co-manages' the nature reserve, with the Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism, and the Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency, and other stakeholders, via a 21-year lease agreement. A community agreement – part of the settlement agreement – determined the rights of these communities to access natural resources within the Protected Area. However, access to the valuable resources within the reserve remains restricted. Furthermore, none of the development agendas outlined for the reserve, meant to benefit the communities to which that land 'belongs', have been successfully implemented. Palmer, Timmermans and Fay (2000) tell the story of how "local empowerment [was] regained as confrontation yielded to negotiation and negotiation yielded co-management, local ownership and development partnerships" (back cover). The authors claim that the Dwesa-Cwebe story is an example of "successful reconciliation between the interests of local residents and protected areas" (*Ibid*: xi). A decade on and 'development' has still not occurred, and poverty persists.

Vulnerability in Dwesa-Cwebe is the consequence of many factors. Regardless of what these factors are (for now), the fact is that vulnerability is what will inevitably lead to food insecurity if not properly addressed. While many households may have food on the table now, livelihoods are by no means secure as they are not sustainable. The problem is not that there is no food. Rather, it is that local availability of, access to and utilisation of this food is restricted by a lack of infrastructure, income constraints and administrative inefficiency, all of which compound to create vulnerability to food insecurity.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to discern how rural households meet their food needs by assessing the contribution of various livelihood activities to household food supply, using the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods framework as conceptual guideline. Livelihood security is a

necessary condition for food security, and thus an analysis of the latter requires an accompanying analysis of the former.

The main objectives of this dissertation are therefore:

- To gain an understanding of how food is secured at household level, and the importance of various livelihood activities in this regard;
- To highlight the structures and processes that exacerbate vulnerability to livelihood and food insecurity or enhance livelihood and food security.

1.5 Problem Statement

Food security at one level does not indicate food security at another. Therefore, even though SA is food secure at the national level, this does not imply that every household in SA has access to nutritionally adequate food. Furthermore, food insecurity should not be reduced to mere events. Rather, it should be seen as “processes that emphasize [its] on-going reality” (Scanlan, 2003: 89).

The South African Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) emphasizes agricultural production and food availability, but these are “not the core tenets of food security in the country” (Drimie and Ruysenaar, 2010: 330). Food insecurity is not only a problem of a lack of food, or an essentially agricultural problem, but “is primarily a function of total household income” (de Klerk *et al*, 2004: 4). According to Scanlan, “Food security ... has more to do with inequality than anything else” (2003: 89). The current livelihood practices of rural households in communal areas are not sustainable in the long-term, as no security of income exists other than monthly welfare grant payments. The absence of infrastructure and local employment opportunities in Dwesa-Cwebe cultivates dependence on the state, which increases vulnerability, and inevitably will lead to greater livelihood and food insecurity if not properly addressed. The specific stressors in this area have made residents vulnerable to livelihood and food insecurity. These stressors need to be highlighted so that they can be properly addressed through the implementation of context-specific approaches.

1.6 Research Questions

The main research question focuses on:

- How do rural households meet their food needs?

In order to better interrogate this issue, the question is broken down into sub-questions:

- What are the various livelihood activities that rural households engage in and what contribution do each of these activities make to the food security status of the household?
- How does restricted access to the protected area affect (if at all) livelihood and food security?
- How important are welfare grants?
- What structures and processes constrain and/or enhance livelihood and food security?
- Are women, the elderly and the young negatively affected?

1.7 Limitations

The following limitations are worth noting:

- The research was conducted in the Transkei, where isiXhosa is the principal language spoken. Since the researcher does not speak isiXhosa herself, a translator was employed to assist with communication. Translation is often acknowledged as the art of loss. For this reason – although every effort to gain as true and clear an understanding as possible was undertaken – the researcher acknowledges that some significance or meaning may have been lost.
- Time and financial constraints resulted in a small – but in-depth - case study and therefore the findings reported in this thesis are context specific. This thesis seeks to highlight important issues that may necessitate further research, rather than to make broad statements about the state of affairs nationally or influence policy.
- The case study consists of two embedded units that were selected based on (among other criteria) their cooperativeness. The researcher acknowledges that this may have excluded examples that are more representative.

1.8 Methodology

1.8.1 Why a Qualitative Case Study?

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world around them, making this world more visible. Qualitative research is also 'naturalistic' in that "researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011: 3). Qualitative research thus aims to answer 'how' and 'why' something occurs as it does, stressing the socially constructed nature of reality. To get to the 'how' and 'why', the qualitative researcher employs a variety of empirical materials (case studies, interviews, artefacts, introspection, historical texts, observation, and many more). According to Yin (2009: 8), case studies are the preferred research method when:

- a. "How" or "why" explanatory questions or exploratory "what" questions are being asked;
- b. The researcher has little control over the events being studied; and,
- c. The study is addressing a contemporary trend.

For the purposes of this thesis, the case study method was considered the more appropriate methodology. The objectives and design of the case study are presumably based on theoretical propositions. These propositions shape data collection and analysis (Yin, 2009). Hence, case study research begins with a thorough literature review and a careful posing of research objectives (*Ibid*). Cases may be simple or complex, but the general objective remains the same: "to develop as full an understanding of that case as possible" (Punch, 1998: 150, cited in Silverman, 2010: 138). Even though the case study method does not involve generalising from the sample to the wider population (as it does not establish the frequency or prevalence of a phenomenon), its value lies in the fact that it highlights/establishes the mechanisms by which that phenomenon is brought to being, sustained or changed.

1.8.2 Case Study Design

As the purpose of this thesis is to *explore* and *describe* a phenomenon in its real-life context, it is referred to as a 'Descriptive' case study (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, because this thesis

looks at the same issue in the same community, and how it is addressed by different household structures, it is referred to as a single case with embedded units (*Ibid*). An embedded case study is a case study containing more than one sub-unit of analysis.

An extensive review of the literature revealed the preferred unit of analysis as well as the boundaries of the case. The household was chosen as the unit of analysis as national census places emphasis on the household, but also because the existing data set used employed the same unit of analysis. The literature also provided the researcher with well-founded criteria for household selection⁷, as well as an effective conceptual framework⁸.

The choice of specific case study site was influenced by the availability of literature on the livelihood activities of communities in the Dwesa-Cwebe area, as well as by the fact that it was located adjacent to a protected area. The extensive use of wild natural resources among households in Ntubeni – and in particular of marine resources – made it a potentially appropriate case, especially as case studies on the value of marine resources to livelihood systems (in the South African context) are few (according to Shackleton, Timmermans, Nongwe, Hamer, Palmer and Palmer, 2007).

1.8.3 Data collection methods

There is no distinct set of methods or practices associated with qualitative inquiry. No one method or practice is privileged over another (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The methods used to gather information are shaped by the methodology, but also by the theoretical propositions. Therefore, there are no right or wrong methods, claims Silverman, just methods that are “appropriate to your research topic and the model with which you are working” (2010: 124). Yin (2003) claims that using multiple data sources enhances data credibility. Semi-structured interviews and informal discussions were the chosen methods of primary data collection. Semi-structured interviews were preferred as they are more flexible, allowing the interviewer to respond to and expand upon what the respondent says, addressing issues that are relevant to the respondents themselves. A literature review

⁷A pensioner resides in the household; young children reside in the household; and, household head unemployed.

⁸The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach.

formed the secondary source of data collection. Unique to the case study method is that quantitative survey data may also be interrogated to facilitate a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Baxter and Jack, 2008). An existing data set on Ntubeni, as well as numerous statistical reports compiled by Statistics South Africa and other organisations, formed the quantitative aspect of this thesis.

1.9 Chapter Outline

The structure of the thesis is as follows:

CHAPTER 1: Introduction aimed to introduce the main concepts and provide the context of the research project, while also stating the research questions and limitations encountered. The research design/methodology was discussed in detail in this chapter.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review will examine the available literature on Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods, in both the global and local contexts. The South African national Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) will be interrogated.

CHAPTER 3: Context aims to provide some perspective, introducing the research area through a discussion of its history and socio-economic profile. Beginning with an outline of the provincial state of affairs, the chapter will move on to discuss the history of the broader research area (i.e. the Transkei and the Dwesa-Cwebe Nature and Marine Reserve), and finally onto a discussion of the specific community Property Association – Ntubeni – within which the case study is located.

CHAPTER 4: Case Study Findings and Discussion will consider the data obtained from two in-depth case study units located in Plaatjie. Following a discussion of each unit independently, the researcher will highlight – collectively – those factors that either enhance or undermine the livelihood and food security of the two cases.

CHAPTER 5: Concluding Remarks brings all the information together, discussing core issues and relating the data back to the theory. Findings indicate that food (in)security is not about agriculture alone, or even about the food households produce or consume. Incomes are important, as are issues of access to and utilisation of foodstuffs. Subjectivity matters, and context-specific approaches are required if the vulnerability that leads to livelihood and food insecurity are to be adequately addressed.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Chapter 2 reviews the current literature concerning food security and sustainable livelihoods. It is generally accepted that livelihood security is a necessary condition for food security to exist, and thus an analysis of the latter is incomplete without an analysis of the former. Following a discussion of food security theory in general, the chapter will turn to a discussion of food security in the South African context, highlighting the South African Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS). The IFSS has been both praised and criticised, with considerable concern raised over its emphasis on commercial agriculture as well as the lack of implementing power. The chapter will then review the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA).

2.1 Food Security

Food security was first defined at the 1974 World Food Conference as:

[The] availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic foodstuffs ... to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption ... and to offset fluctuations in production and prices (UN, 1975 cited in Hart, 2009).

This definition of food security emphasised food supply at the international and national levels, and has been significantly revised over the past three decades “as a result of the deeper understanding of the nature of the food problem and changes in thinking about food security” (Hart, 2009: 9). According to Devereux and Maxwell (2003, in Hart, 2009), there have been three major paradigm shifts in the thinking about food (in)security:

1. A shift from the concern of global and national food security to the concern of household and individual food security;
2. A shift from a food-first perspective to a livelihood perspective;

3. A shift from the use of only objective indicators in determining food security to the inclusion of the subjective perceptions of those affected.

Such shifts in the thinking about food (in)security coincided with changes also in policy and practice, globally and locally.

2.1.1 Paradigm shift 1: From National to household and individual food security

The shift in focus to household and individual food security was sparked by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) which, between 1981-1985 developed an approach more focused on “the balance between the demand for and the supply of food” (Hart, 2009: 9). This was due - in large part—to the work of Amartya Sen (1981) “which highlighted the effect of personal entitlements (resources used for production, labour, trade and transfers) in ensuring access to food” (Hart, 2009: 9-10). These changes in thinking occurred at the same time as the World Bank promoted structural adjustment policies, which subordinated poverty reduction and basic needs to a concern for “fiscal balance, macroeconomic stability and internal and external liberalisation” (Maxwell, 2003: 25, in Hart, 2009). Structural adjustment programmes transformed livelihood systems by encouraging livelihood diversification and “a shift towards non-agricultural sources of income to secure the means to purchase food” (Drimie *et al.*, 2008, in Hart, 2009).

The World Bank *Report on Poverty and Hunger* released in 1986 used hunger as a proxy for poverty, promoting a focus on food security between 1986 and 1990. The report also introduced for the first time the distinction between chronic and transitory food insecurity, highlighting its temporal dimension:

- Chronic food insecurity is recognized as long-term or persistent, an almost continuous state of affairs. “It is closely related to structural deficiencies in the local food system or economy, chronic poverty, lack of assets and low incomes which persistently curtail food availability and access over a protracted period of time (DFID, 2004; FAO, 2005)” (in Hart, 2009: 10).

- Transitory food insecurity is acknowledged as sudden in onset, short-term/temporary, with short periods of extreme scarcity of food availability and access. “Such situations can be brought about by climatic shocks, natural disasters, economic crises or conflict ... [or] through smaller shocks at the household level (e.g. loss of income and crop failure)” (Hart, 2009:10).

There is also a third temporal feature – seasonal, or cyclical, food insecurity. This is usually a known or regular occurrence, and thus considered more easily predictable. Devereux (2006) suggests that it is better understood as a form of recurrent transitory food insecurity, as it is of limited duration (usually only a few months). However, he suggests that it nevertheless has important linkages to chronic food insecurity as during this time households often have to sell or consume their limited assets in order to survive, and the depletion of these assets increases the severity of future experiences of food insecurity (in Hart, 2009: 10-11).

2.1.2 Paradigm shift 2: From ‘food-first’ to Livelihoods and Vulnerability

The focus on food security in the 1980s thus moved to a focus on poverty in the 1990s, “reinforcing the idea that a livelihoods perspective, rather than a food-first perspective, was a more accurate way of looking at food security” (Maxwell, 2003, in Hart, 2009). It was observed that people would rather go hungry than sell their assets in an effort to ensure livelihood security. Livelihoods approaches were popularised by Chambers and Conway (1991) and highlighted the importance of vulnerability and of coping with and managing risk (Hart, 2009). During the early 1990s, the analysis of food insecurity as a social and political construct emerged (*ibid*).

Hart asserts that both vulnerability and food insecurity “are functions of households’ exposure to stressors and their ability to cope with these” (Hart, 2009: 14). Households with fewer assets required to cope with shocks or gradual changes will be forced to sell or use (deplete) their limited asset base, increasing their vulnerability to and experience of severe food insecurity. Those already experiencing food insecurity (in full, the chronically food insecure) are most vulnerable to further food insecurity. “The assumption that vulnerability refers to the risk of moving from a food-secure status to an insecure status is too narrow and does not capture the reality of the situation experienced by most of the food-insecure”

(*Ibid*). However, such a narrow assumption may well explain why food insecurity is most often only addressed when it becomes a crisis (*Ibid*).

2.1.3 Paradigm shift 3: Objective indicators to Subjective perceptions

At the same time that these changes in understanding the multiple dimensions of food insecurity were taking place, the realisation that objective measures and associated indicators were problematic was also occurring (Hart, 2009). Nutritional status, under nourishment and anthropometric indicators (such as height-for-age, or weight-for-height) are used as proxies for food insecurity status.

Hart (2009: 15-16) provides two reasons why these measures and indicators are problematic. Firstly, nutritional adequacy (e.g. daily energy intake) as an indicator is problematic because nutritional requirements vary in relation to age, health, size, environment, and work and behaviour patterns. Different countries and organisations have different measures for what constitutes a minimum energy requirement for each person. Pacey and Payne (1985, in Hart, 2009) claim that such estimates are therefore value judgements. Secondly, the omission of qualitative aspects from quantitative measures of food security is also concerning, as cultural factors, food preferences and perceived threat or vulnerability to risks are integral to an understanding of food security. According to Hart (2009), this brought into the debate the idea of food sovereignty, “whereby people not only have the right to food but also the right to choose what food they want to produce and consume, and how they wish to do so”. This is referred to as food preferences in more recent food security definitions.

2.2 A more robust definition

All these gradual shifts coincided with changes in policy and practice, resulting in the current and more encompassing definition of food security. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) define food security as follows:

Food Security exists, at the individual, household, national, regional, and global levels when all people, at all times, *have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for a healthy and active life* (2001, cited in Hart, 2009: 17; own emphasis added).

This comprehensive definition indicates that food security has four dimensions, namely the availability of food, access to food, the utilisation of food, and the stability of availability and access to food. According to Faber, Schwabe and Drimie (2008), these four dimensions are interconnected and thus all four must be present for people to be food secure. No single element is able to ensure/sustain food security on its own. When one or more of these elements is weakened, food insecurity may occur.

2.3 Food (in)security in South Africa

While SA is the least rural of the fourteen countries in the sub-Saharan Africa region, 42 % of the population is rural (FAO-STAT, 2008, in Hart, 2009). At the same time, however, SA appears to be relatively non-rural when considering the low contribution of agriculture to its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). At the end of 2011, the percentage contribution to the annual gross domestic product by Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing was 2.5 % - the lowest of all the industries (StatSA). Thus, “one might surmise that agriculture and rural livelihoods are relatively unimportant [...] However, it is important to point out that the national accounts do not convey a clear picture of the importance of land access on the ground” (Hart, 2009). Jacobs *et al* (2008, in Hart, 2009) claim that close to four and a half million black South Africans participate in agriculture of some kind (including livestock husbandry) – more than five times as many people as are employed as wage earners in the large-scale commercial farming sector (Aliber *et al*, 2007 in Hart, 2009). Furthermore, many of these agriculturalists are involved in farming that is “a low-input, low-output activity that provides a supplementary source of food for the household” (Hart, 2009). Nevertheless, according to Aliber (2009), this type of production may well account for a gross imputed value of about R2 billion in foodstuffs for rural households in the South African context.

Maxwell (2001) claims that agriculture is at the heart of food security and he outlines three strategies of agricultural development, which are at the disposal of governments, each of which strives to achieve a different objective: The growth-first strategy concentrates agricultural investment, research and extension on high-potential areas, where returns are highest; The food-first strategy concentrates on maximising output, mostly in high-potential areas, however with a marked bias to food production; The food-security-first strategy prioritises improving the ability of poor people to acquire food by production, purchase, exchange or gift – in full, food entitlement. The South African approach, it could be argued, tends to neglect the third strategy (and to a degree the second) and focus on the first. The failure of successful implementation of the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) for South Africa supports this argument, as the Department of Agriculture (DoA) emphasises commercial agriculture at the national level as the priority agricultural development initiative. The result is that poor people's ability to acquire food (their food entitlement) is weakened, making them more vulnerable to food insecurity.

However, some scholars argue that food security is not essentially an agricultural problem. De Klerk *et al* (2004) claim that "household food security is primarily a function of total household income, however derived, and much less a function of the food that individual households produce for their own consumption" (p. 4), and Scanlan (2003: 89) asserts that inequality is what leads to food insecurity. Food security is not the consequence of agriculture alone. Food security is a multidimensional phenomenon, and therefore requires a multidimensional approach, such as that outlined in the IFSS.

2.3.1 The South African Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS)

The meaning of food security is not as obvious as it may seem, and this is particularly true in South Africa. While it is widely acknowledged that the global credit crisis has affected oil and food prices, making global food security more difficult to achieve and maintain, how do we define and measure food security in the South African context? According to Altman, Hart and Jacobs (2009), South Africa has no specific and accepted measure of food security, and currently there are no regularised ways of monitoring it, and this is problematic.

The definition of food security adopted by the South African government in the Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) is similar to that adopted by the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO):

Universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life (DoA, 2002: 6).

This is also the working definition adopted for this thesis.

The IFSS was politically motivated by the “unsatisfactory situation that was occasioned by the implementation of many food security programmes by different government departments in all spheres” (DoA, 2002: 5). Cabinet implemented the IFSS in an effort to streamline, harmonize and integrate the diverse food security programmes into a national food security strategy (*Ibid.*). The strategy acknowledges two inter-related challenges that shape food security in SA:

1. Maintaining and increasing the country’s ability to meet its national food requirements (by meeting the needs of domestic agricultural production and ensuring the ability to import foods it cannot sufficiently produce); and,
2. Eradicating the poverty and inequality that exists among the majority of households.

The main goal of the IFSS is to eradicate hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity by fifty per cent by 2015 (in line with MDG 1). The five strategic objectives outlined by the strategy to achieve this goal are increased household production and trading; improved income generation and job creation opportunities; improved nutrition and food safety; increased safety nets and food emergency management systems; and, improved analysis and information system management (DoA, 2002; Koch, 2011: 5). As will be argued in this thesis, these objectives have not been realised (except for perhaps increased safety nets in the form of welfare grants).

The IFSS states that theirs is a development approach, which entrenches public-private-civil society partnerships, focusing on household food security without overlooking national food security (DoA, 2002). A core of Social Sector Cluster departments are said to support the IFSS. These include Departments of Health; Social Development; Public Works; Water Affairs and Forestry; Transport; Education; Housing; Provincial and Local Government; Land Affairs; Environment and Tourism; Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. "The list is not exhaustive" (DoA, 2002: 7). The IFSS therefore does not have its own dedicated programme, reminds Koch (2011), but instead it brings together the various programmes of these different ministries.

The intended outcomes of the IFSS are also promising (DoA, 2002: 10). These outcomes include (but are not limited to) greater ownership of productive assets and participation in the economy by those considered to be food insecure; improved levels of nutrition and food safety among the food insecure; greater participation among the food insecure in the social security system; improved information and communication on the conditions of the food insecure and the impact of various food security interventions; and, enhanced public-private-civil society participation in food security interventions.

As already mentioned, the institutional arrangements for achieving these outcomes involve different organs at different levels with distinct yet seemingly integrated roles and responsibilities. However, despite the fact that this arrangement largely coincides with international best practice, the IFSS is experiencing a number of problems in implementing their approaches and thus achieving their intended outcomes.

According to Drimie and Ruysenaar (2010), institutional arrangements and poor alignment of sectors at all levels are to blame. A lack of political will, poor civil society involvement and a lack of legislation have been cited as crucial elements missing from the IFSS. Of particular concern, however, is the emphasis placed on agricultural productivity (through the leadership of the DoA, to whom the IFSS was consigned), rather than on all the aspects of this multidimensional phenomenon. Drimie and Ruysenaar state, "an explicit focus on an agricultural production rationale ... has not succeeded in engaging the reality of food insecurity 'on the ground'" (2010: 328). Agriculture only addresses part of the problem of

food insecurity, especially because the DoA still equates food security with national food security and the white commercial farming minority to the neglect of household food security amongst the poor black majority (Apartheid residuals still remain) (*Ibid*). Even though the IFSS outlined the need for an integrated approach, remind Drimie and Ruysenaar, the biased production approach of the DoA “subdued the stated intention of an integrated approach ... [influencing] how other departments conceptualised food security” (2010: 325). What is needed is a more integrated approach to food security, one that involves government and non-governmental actors, through a broad range of services, “[the facilitation of which] requires a concerted effort and recognition of the issues within a wider array of government departments, and elsewhere, for it to become a reality” (Drimie and Ruysenaar, *Ibid*: 332).

Also concerning is the lack of dedicated central funds for food security, at any level of government. Budgets are allocated by sector and by programme within each sector. Hart (2009: 39) asserts that this “prevents the development of collaborative food security-focused projects/programmes that are funded by a single entity”. Furthermore, there are a number of different programmes “that appear to engage in some form of contribution to food security in a very broad sense” (Hart, *ibid*), further complicating matters. The reported lack of impact that some programmes have on the poor is of further concern, as they often target better-resourced individuals and groups rather than the most vulnerable. Government policies and practices are severely constrained at the level of meaningful implementation, due in large part to “poor coordination at most tiers of implementation and possibly to inadequate coherence in determining what needs to be done and how best to achieve this, in light of the multidimensional nature and cause of food insecurity” (Hart, *Ibid*: 42).

Inter-departmental rivalry, poor commitment to the strategy, and departmental lack of capacity and resources has constrained the functioning of the Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme (IFSNP). “This may in turn be a result of the erroneous belief that food security is the responsibility of the DoA. The fact that the DoA is the only department with a food security directorate probably reinforces this perception and enables others to shirk responsibility”, claims Hart (2009: 43). The fact that different departments are not fully

aware of the multidimensional nature of food insecurity may be the reason for the lack of commitment to a coordinated and integrated process.

One of the greatest concerns about current research is the multiple definitions of food insecurity and the very wide variety of indicators that exist. There is no agreement about an overarching framework to guide and make coherent use of the different food security measures (Hart, 2009: 44). Furthermore, “the multidimensional nature of food insecurity (and vulnerability) has implications for national level assessment frameworks of vulnerability to food insecurity that rely almost exclusively on quantitative data ... Such frameworks are unable to adequately collect and interpret qualitative information” (*Ibid*). Hart concludes that these assessment frameworks are therefore by design “unable to grasp the complexity and multidimensional nature of stressors, and the diversity of household sensitivity and resilience” (*Ibid*: 45). He suggests that local studies are perhaps more promising, as they adopt “a more combined and multidimensional approach to understanding the effects of multiple stressors” (Hart, *ibid*).

So while the IFSS looks good on paper, it has not achieved its stated intentions, and this probably mainly due to the fact that all involved are under the impression that food security is an agricultural problem. Being consigned to the DoA has not helped either, as this reaffirms for many that it must be about agriculture. Why else would the DoA be the main department dealing with food security? South Africa needs a department or organisation of government that deals only with food (in)security, as well as an accompanying budget of its own with which to implement its plans. This department/organisation also needs to develop accepted measurements and indicators to better monitor and evaluate food (in)security in South Africa.

2.3.2 The gendered-dimension of food security

Reddy and Moletsane (2009) conduct a broad literature review of the gendered dimensions of food security in South Africa, and point out that households headed by women and the elderly have the highest rates of food insecurity in South Africa. Preliminary evidence suggests that women and girls, despite their key role in household food production, are more vulnerable to food insecurity and are considered most-at-risk populations. A study

conducted by Aphane, Dzivakwi and Jacobs (2010) on food buying patterns in the rural EC and Limpopo concludes that female-headed households have lower food and total household expenditures than male-headed households (in absolute monetary terms). According to the *Measurement of Poverty* report (StatsSA, 2000), nearly one third of households in South Africa are female-headed, and are considerably poorer than male-headed households. “Vulnerability to food insecurity”, claim Reddy and Moletsane, “is clearly gendered” (2009: 7). This issue was explored in the fieldwork – the vulnerability of women.

2.4 The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA)

Given the need to widen the analysis of food security to livelihood security, the sustainable livelihoods approach is therefore chosen as the conceptual framework to guide this study.

Chambers and Conway (1991: 6) provided the first real working definition of sustainable livelihoods:

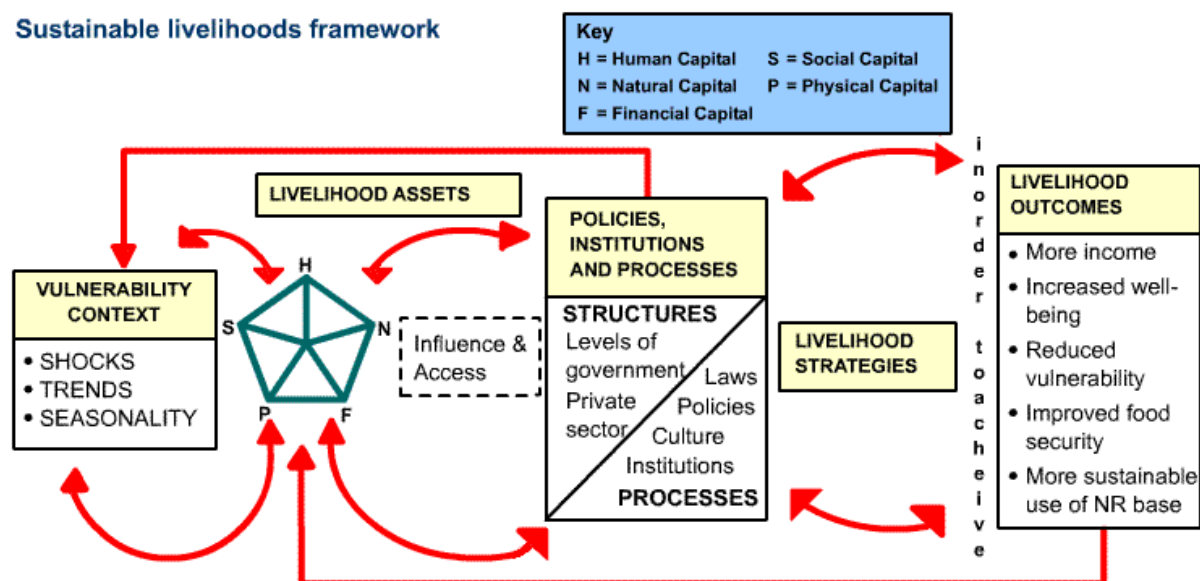
A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long term.

As made clear by Chambers and Conway, the concept of sustainable livelihoods is based on the ideas of capability, equity, and sustainability, each of which is both end and means, in the sense that “each is seen as good in itself ... and each is also seen as a means to good ends” (1991: 3-4). Capability (in Sen’s use of the word) refers to being able to perform certain basic functions; to be able to cope with stress and shocks, and being able to find and make use of livelihood opportunities. Equity implies “a less unequal distribution of assets, capabilities and opportunities and especially enhancement of those of the most deprived [and including] an end to discrimination ... and to end an urban and rural poverty and deprivation” (*Ibid*: 4). Sustainability has many meanings. Environmentally, it refers to

(among other things) the overexploitation of non-renewable resources and physical degradation. In common parlance, it “connotes self-sufficiency and an implicit ideology of long-term self-restraint and self-reliance” (*Ibid*: 5). Moreover, in the social, or livelihood, context it refers to “the ability to maintain and improve livelihoods while maintaining or enhancing the local and global assets and capabilities on which livelihoods depend” (*Ibid*). Thus, food security in the sustainable livelihoods framework, relates to the equal ability of households and individuals to sufficiently sustain themselves, both now and in the future.

Scoones (1998) developed a conceptual framework to guide research into sustainable livelihoods focusing on different households’ differential access to livelihood assets, which the poor must often make trade-offs and choices about. These livelihood assets comprise: Human Capital (education, knowledge and skills, capacity to adapt, etc.); Social Capital (patronage, kinship, relations of trust, shared values and behaviours, common rules and sanctions, etc.); Natural Capital (land, water, wildlife, biodiversity, etc.); Physical Capital (infrastructure, tools and technology, etc.); and, Financial Capital (savings, credit and debt, remittances, pensions, wages, etc.). Livelihood strategies and outcomes are not just dependent on access to assets or constrained by the vulnerability context, but also transformed by the environment of structures and processes. The framework is illustrated in Figure 1 below.

Sustainable livelihoods framework



(Scoones, 1998)

Figure 1 – The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

2.4.1 A Word on Livelihoods Approaches

The sustainable livelihoods approach concept and framework has been adapted to suit a variety of contexts, issues, priorities and applications. Thus, one needs to ask what the research is for; what is its intention. Murray (2002: 490-491) distinguishes three different approaches to livelihoods research. The first is the circumspective or ‘looking around’ approach, which “concentrates on the empirical investigation of combinations of modes of livelihood at one moment in time [...] Its key objective [being] to open up questions about the relationships between different socio-economic activities”. The second is the retrospective or ‘looking back’ approach, which involves longitudinal comparison. The key objective of this approach is “the analysis of household or family trajectories of accumulation or impoverishment over time and of particular matrices of vulnerability”. The third approach is the prospective or ‘looking forward’ approach, which “concentrates on the distillation of past experience into future policy”. The key objectives of this approach “might be described as the building of alternative conceptual frameworks for facilitating opportunities for improving livelihoods, and more effective planning and coordination across sectoral boundaries”.

Since this thesis is not aimed at creating or influencing policy, but simply at elaborating issues of food (in)security among the rural poor, the circumspective approach best describes the approach taken in this thesis. Furthermore, because there is no single sustainable livelihood approach, flexibility in method is a characteristic feature of the approach. Nevertheless, in most livelihoods models, the main elements are similar and analysis will address all of the following to some degree (Twigg, 2007: 2). Firstly, context with emphasis placed on the external environment in which poor people live and which is responsible for many of their hardships. Secondly, assets and capabilities (or 'capital') which are the resources poor people possess or have access to and use to gain a livelihood. Thirdly, livelihoods models address transforming structures and processes, which are the institutions, organisations, policies and legislation that determine access to assets and choice of livelihood strategies. Fourth are livelihood strategies, or the ways in which poor people deploy their assets and capabilities to improve their livelihoods (in full, consumption, production, processing, exchange and income-generating activities). Last, but not least, livelihoods models address outcomes, acknowledging that successful livelihood strategies should lead to more income and more economically sustainable livelihoods, increased well-being, reduced vulnerability and more sustainable use of the natural resource base.

2.5 Conclusion

This literature review has made clear that sustainable livelihoods are necessary for food security to exist. It has also elucidated that food insecurity is a multidimensional phenomenon that requires a multi-sectoral approach if it is to be sufficiently addressed. Food security is not only about the food that households produce and consume, but is in reality more about livelihoods, however derived. Furthermore, it is not only about access to and availability of food, but also about preferences and quality of life. It is also not an essentially agricultural problem alone, but rather it involves all sectors – social development, health and welfare, equality and human rights, to name but a few.

While South Africa is considered food secure at the national level, food insecurity remains a serious threat to many impoverished (and in particular rural) households. Furthermore, women, the elderly and children are said to be more susceptible to food insecurity. The right

to sufficient food is entrenched in the South African Constitution, and the country has even created an Integrated Food Security Strategy in an effort to harmonise and streamline various food security programmes into a national plan of action. However, while an excellent strategy on paper and a relevant framework for different stakeholders, the IFSS lacks implementing power and has thus not achieved its intended outcomes. Poor coordination, inter-departmental rivalry, a lack of political will and departmental capacity, not to mention its focus on commercial agriculture, are few of the reasons for the failure of the IFSS. Furthermore, a lack of definitional clarification on food insecurity, as well as the wide variety of indicators used to measure food insecurity, compounds our ability to assess and manage the problem in South Africa. The focus on quantitative indicators is also a concern, as subjectivity and context clearly matter.

CHAPTER 3

Context

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the context of the research area, to provide a backdrop within which to locate the case study. A description of the Eastern Cape Province highlights the inefficiency of provincial administration and the resultant low standard of living experienced by much of the population. The chapter will also provide a brief history of the Transkei and Dwesa-Cwebe in an effort to elucidate the current state of affairs. A history of colonialism and unpopular state interventions in the area have resulted in a legacy of underdevelopment and vulnerability. A discussion of the case study locale – the Community Property Association (CPA) of Ntubeni – will then follow. The researcher will analyse an existing data set and relevant literature on Ntubeni, exploring natural resource use and socio-economic circumstances within the CPA⁹. Government social assistance, subsistence agriculture and wild natural resource use form the mainstay of this rural economy, whose development is impeded by a severe lack of infrastructure and local employment opportunities, as well as administrative inefficiency.

3.1 The Eastern Cape

The Eastern Cape Province (EC) is “by any account, the most deprived province in South Africa” as well as the country’s “most stressed province”, asserts Greg Ruiters (2011: 1). The end of Apartheid resulted in the re-drawing of provincial boundaries, with the EC becoming the second largest province in South Africa by size. The EC inherited the two ‘former homelands’ of the Ciskei and the Transkei, Bantustans with “the poorest populations, the most burdens and the worst structural problems of the country” (*Ibid*: 29). The Commission on the Demarcation/Delimitation of Regions (CDDR), who pushed for a larger EC Province

⁹The researcher is greatly indebted to Herman Timmermans, Charlie Shackleton, Nic Hamer and Robin Palmer (as well as their associates) for the authorised use of the Ntubeni data set, obtained through fieldwork conducted in 2003. The data set may be dated, but was the only one available for the specific study site at the time of conducting this study. Thus, while perhaps dated, it is nevertheless context-specific.

during the re-drawing of provincial boundaries process, warned that the proposed Eastern Capes' economic base "may not be adequate to meet fiscal requirements for adequate social and physical infrastructure" (CDDR, 1993:3, in Ruiters, 2011). It was thus from its birth "the poorest, least resourced and most administratively weak of all the provinces" (*ibid*: 8), a state of affairs that continues into the present day.

3.1.1 Major issues affecting the province

Ruiters (2011) outlines a few key issues affecting the EC Province. Issue number one is described as an incoherent provincial civil service. Because the Eastern Cape incorporated two Bantustans (the Ciskei and the Transkei) it inherited over 50 000 civil servants who now had to be absorbed into the new administration. From the beginning, administratively, factional struggles and 'cliqueism' created tensions between old and new civil servants, resulting in civil service strikes and corruption, which "continue to haunt the province" (Ruiters, 2011: 30). An incoherent civil service is perhaps the leading cause of the poor state of affairs in the EC Province.

Issue number two is the outflow of skilled people. The EC (historically) formed part of the British Empires' first colony. Since the 1890s, money and skills moved to the gold mines, changing the provinces economy, signalling the decline of the agricultural economy in particular. By the mid-1930s, according to Maylam (1986), close to 40 % of South Africa's black miners came from the EC, and in particular the Transkei (in Ruiters, 2011: 8). Retrenchments in the mining industry since the 1980s resulted in "dramatic decreases in income" (*ibid*), especially in the Transkei Wild Coast areas. By 1993, industrial sites collapsed, as they no longer received Apartheid state subsidisation. This drastic economic decline turned the new EC Province into what many termed a "dumping ground for surplus people" (*ibid*). The result is depopulation due to out-migration, as people move elsewhere in search of employment and opportunity. StatsSA (2008) claim that migration flows – as severe as they are out of the EC – have been underestimated, suggesting that the EC "has even a *lower* growth rate than previously estimated" (in Ruiters, 2011: 31). Furthermore, those who do move away are the youth (between 15 and 29 years old), those with a better education and those with a higher than average income (*ibid*: 32). This loss of skilled labour

from the EC has had and continues to have negative consequences for the growth of the province.

Issue number three concerns demography, poverty and death. The EC has a disproportionate number of very poor people, unemployed people, children, elderly, and female-headed households compared to other provinces (Ruiters, 2011: 32). It also has very high absolute numbers of poor people, and a higher than national average unemployment rate. Furthermore, it has the highest death rate in the country, and the South African Institute for Race Relations (SAIRR) estimated that by 2010 the EC would account for 43% of South Africa's AIDS deaths (2008, in Ruiters, 2011). All these factors combine to perpetuate a system of poverty and inequality.

Issue number four has to do with logistics and geography. As the population of the EC is especially dispersed, the cost of providing basic services (such as education, water and health) increases. Bad roads further exacerbate the problem of service provision. This makes the geographical 'reach' of the state weaker in the EC than in other provinces (Ruiters, 2011), and this reach is further exacerbated by the incoherent civil service in the province.

Last, but not least, is issue number five - political rivalries. New class formation has created deep rivalries "within and between parties [and thus] now [defies] any ideological lines" (Ruiters, 2011: 33). Because trade unions and civil society lack political independence, they are often "co-opted by one or other faction" (*Ibid*). Such rivalry has led to factional infighting and a lack of correspondence between – and within - different administrative departments. The result is a state of affairs in which nothing is done because no one can agree on what the big issues are and how best to address these. Put more directly, political aspirations trump duty and humanity.

3.1.2 Socio-economic and Demographic profile of the Eastern Cape

The EC comprises the third largest share of the South African population – 13.5 % of the total population, or 6 829 958 people (StatsSA, Mid-year Population Estimates, 2011). Average life expectancy at birth (between 2006 and 2011) was estimated at 50.2 years for males (below the National average of 52.1 years), and 54.4 years for females (below the

National average of 56.2 years). While the unemployment rate¹⁰ in South Africa is 25 %, it stands at 27.1 % in the EC. The EC has a working age population¹¹ of close to 4.2 million people; however, it has a labour force¹² of less than 1.8 million, resulting in a labour force participation rate¹³ of only 42.6 %. The employment-to-population ratio¹⁴ (or, labour absorption rate) in the EC is 31.1 %. The expanded definition of unemployment¹⁵ paints an even bleaker picture, as the unemployment rate becomes even higher – 41.9 percent, as opposed to 27.1 %. (StatsSA, Quarterly Labour Force Survey, Third Quarter, 2011). It is, therefore, no surprise that out migration is almost three times more than in migration. The estimated net migration for the EC (2006-2011) is negative 214 815 people – the highest of any province in South Africa (*Ibid*: 13).

The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) Living Standards Measure (LSM) divides the South African population into ten LSM groups, with LSM 10 the highest standard of living and LSM 1 the lowest. Using 29 variables¹⁶, SAARF calculates an imputed average monthly income. The EC province has the largest number of individuals in LSM 1 (507 000) in the country, with an imputed average monthly income of R 1279 (below the national average of R 1386) (cited in Development Indicators Report, 2010).

¹⁰The unemployment rate is the proportion of the labour force that is unemployed. Under the official (narrow) definition, the unemployed are those people within the economically active population who: did not work during the seven days prior to the interview; want to work and are available to start work within two weeks of the interview; and have taken active steps to look for work or to start some form of self-employment in the four weeks prior to the interview (StatsSA).

¹¹The working-age population comprises all persons aged 15–64 years (StatsSA).

¹²The labour force comprises all persons who are employed plus all persons who are unemployed (StatsSA).

¹³Labour force participation rate is the proportion of the working-age population that is either employed or unemployed (StatsSA).

¹⁴Employment-to-population ratio (labour absorption rate) is the proportion of the working-age population that is employed (StatsSA).

¹⁵The expanded definition of unemployment drops the third criterion (some sort of work-seeking activity) and will therefore include, as unemployed, those who might be termed 'discouraged job-seekers'. This would cover those who said they were unemployed but had not taken active steps to find work in the four weeks prior to the interview, perhaps because they did not feel they had any chance of obtaining work, or because the costs of travelling from home to an area where work might be available were prohibitive, or because of an absence of transport from home to an area where work might be available. Many discouraged job seekers will be found in rural areas distant from the major cities and towns (StatsSA).

¹⁶To view these 29 variables, visit: <http://www.saarf.co.za/LSM/lsm.asp>.

Land-based strategies (agriculture, animal husbandry and wild natural resource use), together with transfers from urban areas and/or government, form the mainstay of the rural economy in the EC (Shackleton, Shackleton and Cousins, 2001). Land-based strategies have significant direct-use value to EC communities, though their contribution is excluded from formal statistics that measure wealth and well-being, and as such, these strategies are seldom considered as a vehicle for poverty alleviation interventions and receive very little support. Government social assistance through welfare grants has thus become the primary source of income for many EC households. As Table 1 below illustrates, over 2.6 million of the more than 15 million grants beneficiaries in SA live in the EC. Those accessing the Old Age grant and the grant constitute the majority of grant beneficiaries nationwide, and in the EC (SASSA, 2011). While the EC has 13.5 % of the total population of SA, it claims more than 17 % of the total grants accessed in the country.

SASSA Statistical Report on Social Grants - April, 2011									
		TOTAL	Old Age	War Veteran	Disability	Grant in Aid	Foster Child	Care Dependency	Child Support
Grant Beneficiaries by type									
	SA	15 028 969	2 686 838	948	1 200 431	59 395	521 863	112 555	10 446 939
	EC	2 600 403	487 618	130	194 516	7 500	110 015	18 458	1 782 166
Grant Recipients by type									
	SA	10 175 388	2 686 838	948	1 200 431	59 395	355 851	110 593	5 761 332
	EC	1 703 768	487 618	130	194 516	7 500	72 537	18 171	923 296

Table 1 – Social Grant Uptake

In the rural Eastern Cape, households depend on multiple livelihood strategies. Affecting the livelihoods of female-headed households, however, are “deep-seated asset inequalities” (Aphane *et al*, 2010: 66) that exist between male-headed and female-headed households. According to Aphane *et al*, “unemployment, income poverty and unequal distribution of non-farm and farm assets are structurally skewed against rural women” (2010: 66), and this negatively affects their ability to cope in a sustainable manner as well as limits their ability to transition to higher living standards. A comparison of household expenditure and net income highlighted the lower food and total household expenditures of female-headed households compared to male-headed households (in absolute money values) (*Ibid*: 70).

Table 2 below illustrates this difference¹⁷. Furthermore, 65 % of total household spending (for female-headed households in the EC) goes towards food (*Ibid.*). “This, coupled with the fact that they also spend the lowest absolute amount of money on food, signals an inability to afford sufficient food for the household” (*Ibid.*). Rural households usually purchase bulk volumes of food items once per month (to lower the costs of multiple trips to retail outlets in town)¹⁸. Since so much of household food spending occurs at supermarkets, these rural net consumers are particularly vulnerable to food price inflation (*Ibid.*). The incidence of child malnutrition for children under five years in the Eastern Cape is 8.1 %, slightly higher than the national incidence of 7.8 % (MDG Country Report, 2010), an indication of the reduced livelihood security of these households.

EC rural household expenditure by gender of hh head		
	Female-headed hh	Male-headed hh
Hh food expenditure (avg/month)	R 654	R 940
Total hh expenditure (food and other items) (avg/month)	R 1020	R 2167
Bulk food/groceries (avg. spend/month)	R 523	R 850
Fruits and vegetables (avg. spend/month)	R 54	R 83

Table 2–Household expenditure in the Rural EC

3.2 A concise history of the Transkei

Colin Bundy (1979) asserts that between 1890 and 1914, the emerging capitalist economy prescribed the limits for growth and development of the Transkei ‘peasantry’.¹⁹ Their relations “*vis-à-vis* the wielders of political and economic power were restructured” (Bundy,

¹⁷Adapted from Aphane *et al* (2010).

¹⁸This is true for this case study, as households in Ntubeni make one trip per month to town to shop for food in retail outlets, as the cost of transport is too much to go more often. There are also no supermarkets locally, meaning these households have no choice but to travel to town to purchase food.

¹⁹ This is the terminology used by Bundy.

1979: 201), defining their role in the political economy. "At the beginning of the 1890s," states Bundy, "the great majority of the Transkei's peasant families raised enough food to feed themselves; many could satisfy their cash needs ... through the production of an agricultural surplus or through selective acceptance of wage labour" (*Ibid*: 202). Some even managed to participate in produce and labour markets "on terms not wholly unfavourable" (*Ibid*), and thus competing successfully with white agriculturalists.

However, a once economically independent nation, Transkeian peasants were 'forced' into the wage-labour market, following the rinderpest epidemic of the late 1890s, which killed 80-90 % of the cattle in the Transkei. The result was "an economic disaster" (Bundy, 1979: 205) for many Africans in the area, as it "liquidated much of the peasant's capital, adversely affected his credit-worthiness, made ploughing more difficult and transport facilities rarer and dearer" (*Ibid.*). However, these events affected peasant families in different ways. 'Marginal'/small peasants (say, those who lost four out of their five cattle) were more seriously affected, as they were less resilient, had less available resources, and thus "[found] it more difficult to produce a surplus through extra exertion on his [sic] own land" (*Ibid*: 206). The relatively 'well-off' peasants (say, those who lost forty of their fifty cattle), on the other hand, could still plough their land using the remainder of their cattle. Furthermore, as more land was now released from grazing needs, the well-off peasant could sow a greater crop and fetch greater profit as the price increased due to increased demand.

Nevertheless, the number of wage-labourers who left the Transkei increased year by year, with a spike in 1903 caused by drought and crop failure and again in 1912 due to east coast fever. As many peasant farmers were now in debt, recuperating cattle became more difficult and Transkei migrants thus became a "regular and major supply of labour on the gold mines" (Bundy, 1979: 209). After 1912 close to fifty or sixty thousand Transkei peasant left to work on the gold mines annually, as they could no longer subsist without wage-labour. This is but one indication of the decline in agriculture in the Transkei. Another was observed between 1900 and 1914 when certain territories became increasingly less able to produce enough grain to feed their population, and as a result these territories had to import grain every year between this period. During this same period, competition for land intensified as the population increased causing physical deterioration of the land. The influx of peasants to

the Transkei was the result of peasants being pushed off their land elsewhere in the Cape. "Peasants were compelled to exist on a smaller total arable land ... [disrupting normal rotation, lessening fertility, hastening erosion, and diminishing returns]" (*Ibid*: 211). Competition for resources increased and so did stratification, as these scarce resources were becoming more unevenly distributed. Headmen and their 'favourites' enjoyed 'choice' land and great benefits, while the young and landless had no option but to sell their labour. As Bundy states, "the success of a large stratum of peasants is not only compatible with, but is a predictable feature of, the underdevelopment of a peasant society as a whole" (*Ibid*: 217).

Once the Transkei was incorporated into the British Cape Colony, settler descendants entered as traders, and subsequently (through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century) trading stores became "a significant part of the fabric of life in the Transkei" (Bundy, 1979: 217). According to Bundy, the whole complex of peasant/trader dealings is yet another factor that "raised the cost of peasant existence" (*Ibid*: 213). These traders were "the most important single agents of economic change, the influential envoys of the advanced economy" (*Ibid*.). The appropriation of peasant surplus was the name of the game, and terms of trade benefited the trader over the peasant producer/consumer. This control meant that the trader absorbed peasant agricultural surplus as personal profit, and it was thus no longer reinvested back into the peasantry. Furthermore, as consumer, the peasant no longer had any effect on the prices of goods. Goods were sold at a very profitable margin. As producer, peasants had little bargaining power and had to accept depressed prices for their products. The lack of transport and thus market access also cut down the amount of grain that the trader would purchase from the peasant. However, as the local trade in crops was still the largest source of annual income for the trader, these circumstances did not abolish trade altogether (*Ibid*: 215-216). The greatest misfortune, however, was observed in the system of credit. Goods bought on credit were sold at inflated profits, sometimes at double the market price (*Ibid*: 214). The creation of debt became "the crucial device in separating Transkei peasants from the means of production" (*Ibid*).

Bundy concludes that underdevelopment was the distinctive feature of peasant production during this period, not progress. It is during this time that the Transkei's 'peculiar form of proletarianization' came into being: "the creation of proletarians who retained the

semblance of access to the means of production, but who had to sell their labour power in order to subsist” (Bundy, 1979: 217). This peculiar form of proletarianization continues into the present.

3.3 Dwesa-Cwebe: the specific research area²⁰

Located on the south eastern coast of South Africa, Dwesa-Cwebe is a mix of communal and state land and is roughly 235 km² in size. It falls under the administration of the Mbhashe Local Municipality (located in Idutywa, roughly 75 km inland), which in turn falls within the jurisdiction of the Amathole District Municipality (located in East London, roughly 250 km southwest). The Dwesa-Cwebe Nature Reserve is approximately 57 km² in size (14 km long and 1-2 km wide), with a Marine Reserve extending for six nautical miles seawards. Dwesa Reserve is the larger of the two reserves and stretches from the Mbhashe River in the north to the Nqabara River in the south. Roughly 80 % of the Dwesa Reserve comprises indigenous forest, with grassland and thornveld comprising the remainder of the landscape. Cwebe Reserve stretches from the Mbhashe River in the south to the Ntlonyane River in the north, and has a forest/grassland ratio of close to 50:50. The marine component of the reserve consists of a rich inter-tidal zone and estuarine environments, as well as an offshore marine environment. Seven ‘villages’ or Communal Property Associations (CPAs) immediately surround the reserve - Cwebe, Hobeni, Mandwane, Ntlangano, Ngoma, Mpume and Ntubeni. Largely undeveloped, the area consists of a few educational facilities, trading stores, a small hotel, private holiday cottages (see Plate 1) and a camping/caravan site with self-catering bungalows. As Timmermans (2004) notes, the under-development of the area is the result of insufficient infrastructure and a lack of both market access and services (amongst other things), which have all served to isolate the area from the nearest centres of economic activity, creating a subsistence ethic among local residents.

²⁰The following is adapted from Timmermans (2004).



Plate 1 –Private ‘cottages’ at Nqabara mouth

3.3.1 The Closing of the Forests and Protest action

Dwesa-Cwebe residents have been subjected to various state interventions over the years, many related to land-use and conservation (Timmermans, 2004). Reserves were established early on in an attempt to reduce habitat destruction and species extinction, caused by the impact of humans to the area (Dennison, 2008: 94). Forestry Reserves, aimed at preserving areas of indigenous forest, were the first such reserves to be established. As early as 1894 the forestry department reportedly removed households from the grasslands in the Dwesa-Cwebe protected area (Vermaak and Peckham, 1996, in Timmermans, 2004). Over the years, various restrictions were applied by the forestry department, outlawing certain activities and prescribing the conditions under which others could be undertaken (*Ibid*). Resettlement through ‘betterment planning’ saw the return of forced removals to the area. Betterment planning²¹ at Dwesa-Cwebe involved the removal of households located adjacent to the reserve so as to create a buffer zone between the people and the reserve (*Ibid*). The result was smaller residential sites (to accommodate the influx of people), which disrupted local livelihoods and created resentment to state intervention.

²¹ “The spatial reorganisation of traditional scattered settlement pattern[s] into ... nucleated residential areas [with] consolidated arable areas and communal grazing” (de Wet, 1983 in Timmermans, 2004).

Further land loss and disruption to livelihoods occurred when the new Republic of Transkei sought to turn the Cwebe and Dwesa reserves into one “showcase wildlife reserve” (Dennison, 2008: 97). The combined reserve was subsequently fenced in 1976 and game was introduced or reintroduced, and residents were excluded. Prohibition on all forms of natural resource harvesting from within the reserve “impacted negatively on the natural and physical capital that people could access” (Timmermans, 2004: 18). In 1991, this exclusion extended to the sea with the establishment of a marine reserve. This exclusion caused resentment among the residents, with major ramifications.

The military coup by Major Bantu Holomisa in 1987, and the murder of South African Communist Party leader Chris Hani in 1993, lead to a state of anarchy in the Transkei, during which white tourists were attacked on their way to the Wild Coast, resulting in the collapse of several hotels and thus tourism in the area. A severe drought coincided. Local residents at Dwesa-Cwebe appealed to conservation authorities for use of the Cwebe reserve for emergency grazing, a plea that went unheeded, and lead to ‘illegal’ grazing in the reserve. A request for formal restoration of access to the reserve in early 1994 was ignored, which led to a mass protest meeting outside the reserve. After still no response by September 1994 “hundreds of people invaded the reserve, cutting down trees and ravishing the shellfish” (Dennison, 2008: 99), in full view of the world as the event was covered by national television.

Negotiations ensued, as the army was called in to restore order. These negotiations resulted in the restoration of (restricted) access to the natural resources within the reserve in 1995 (Timmermans, 2004). During this time, community leaders were working with the Transkei Land Service Organisation (TRALSO) to file a land claim on the Dwesa-Cwebe Reserve, which was ultimately successful and resulted in an R 14 million restoration package. The community, through Community Property Associations (CPAs) and the Dwesa-Cwebe Land Trust, became the rightful owners of the Dwesa-Cwebe Reserve (including The Haven Hotel, the campsites and cabins), on condition that the reserve remain a conservation area in perpetuity, managed by Eastern Cape Nature Conservation (now Eastern Cape Parks and Tourism Agency). The community were compensated “for the ‘lost opportunity’ represented by this restriction [and they] received a Settlement and Land Acquisition Grant of R16 000

per household, which they pooled to invest in local tourism development” (Timmermans, 2004: 100). However, the lack of any co-management agreement has stalled tourism development and many residents still harbour a deep mistrust of the government. Furthermore, the Land Trust is still awaiting the title deeds for the land, and no one appears to be in charge of designing or implementing a development plan for Dwesa-Cwebe. In 2001, the forests were once again ‘temporarily’ closed, though weaving and thatch grass could still be harvested (periodically). To date, this decision has not been revised (Shackleton *et al*, 2007).

3.4 Ntubeni

Ntubeni is one of seven Dwesa-Cwebe CPAs, and lies between the south western boundary of the Dwesa Reserve (to the north) and the Nqabara River (to the south). Ntubeni is 10.59 km² in size and comprises three sections or sub-localities – Mkuhlu, Ngomane and Gume/Plaatjie²². According to 1998 statistics, Ntubeni had 1 836 residents and 193 households, with a population density of 173 people per km² (Timmermans, 2004). Due to the high levels of migration/absenteeism, the *de facto* population density was lower, at 107 people per km². Betterment planning was met with great resistance in Ntubeni, and was thus only partially implemented.

Nearly 30 % of Ntubeni (3.16 km²) comprises forest and woodland. Field cultivation has been largely abandoned and Acacia woodland now predominates where fields once stood. Soil fertility is poor and rainfall high, leading to soils becoming leached and acid. Ntubeni has two perennial rivers – the Nqabara River, a large river system with a catchment area of 402 km², and the Ngomane River that is a more localised system. There are a few freshwater springs in the Ntubeni area (see Plate2), but these dry up during the winter months. Grasslands are common, and are normally associated with common grazing areas. There are also a number of woodlots in the vicinity, in addition to the indigenous forests, which were planted to provide alternatives to indigenous wood for poles and fuel wood. Ntubeni is of coastal locality and has rocky shores (stretching for one kilometre outside of the nature

²²Literature refers to Gume; however residents refer to their locality as Plaatjie.

reserve) with a rich inter-tidal zone, important from a livelihoods perspective as it provides residents with access to the vital marine resource, shellfish (Timmermans, 2004).



Plate2 – Luthando at the freshwater spring adjacent to the beach near Plaatjie

3.4.1 Natural resource use²³

Fuel wood is still widely used in Ntubeni. There is relatively little local trade in fuel wood, with only a few households doing so on an ad hoc basis. Most households collect fuel wood for personal consumption, from the neighbouring woodlots. Thatch grass, widely used as a roofing material, is also mainly collected for personal use, with very few households selling or trading. Thatch is harvested from around the village (commons) as well as from within the reserve, though harvesting from within the reserve is restricted to winter months only (May through August). A majority (97 %) of households used grass brooms Sand and clay for building and plastering is also collected from the local environment. The majority (92.1 %) of residents from Ntubeni collected clay to make unfired bricks (mostly for personal homestead building, though some small scale trade exists), with 90.9 % of households collecting sand to mix with cement used for either flooring or bricks, or general household construction. Fencing poles were also collected from local forests, with no households selling these. Wooden utensils (fighting sticks, hoe- or axe- handles, spoons, sledges, just to

²³The following information is adapted from the Ntubeni data set (N=39) obtained from Shackleton *et al* (2003/4), or from the Shackleton *et al* (2007) paper, which uses the same data set.

name a few) were also common, with some trade existing. Over 80 % of households at Ntubeni possessed reed products that they had either bought or made themselves. Trade in these products thrived, the primary market being within the local villages (to neighbours and friends, with 13.2 % of residents claiming to have bought woven products), though some households did sell further afield (for example, to hawkers in the urban areas) or to tourists.

Wild leaves (spinach) were also found to be used regularly, with 92.1 % of Ntubeni households consuming this (more so in summer than in winter due to availability). Households collected for own consumption with no buying or selling occurring. Wild fruits were also commonly used among the majority of households (63.2 %). Many respondents claimed that children were the ones who consumed wild fruit whilst out playing or herding cattle. Most adults who consumed wild fruit said they did so opportunistically, when encountered. No trade in wild fruits existed. Half of the households surveyed claimed to consume bush meat, trapped locally. However, there was a large degree of variation in this regard with some households claiming to consume bush meat only once or twice a year with others claiming to do so a couple of times per month. However, no local trade in bush meat was reported. Fish and shellfish were widely consumed in Ntubeni, with 86.8 % of households consuming the former and 94.7 % consuming the latter (mainly mussels and abalone). Both marine resources had higher collection rates in the summer months. Trade in fish was prevalent with 35.1 % of households claiming to have purchased fish from friends or neighbours, and 27.8 % of households purporting to sell fish, primarily to local villagers (70 %) and occasionally to tourists (40 %). Some households only sold their surplus catch. Harvesting of both wild mushrooms and wild honey was usually opportunistic.

3.4.2 Socio-Economics²⁴

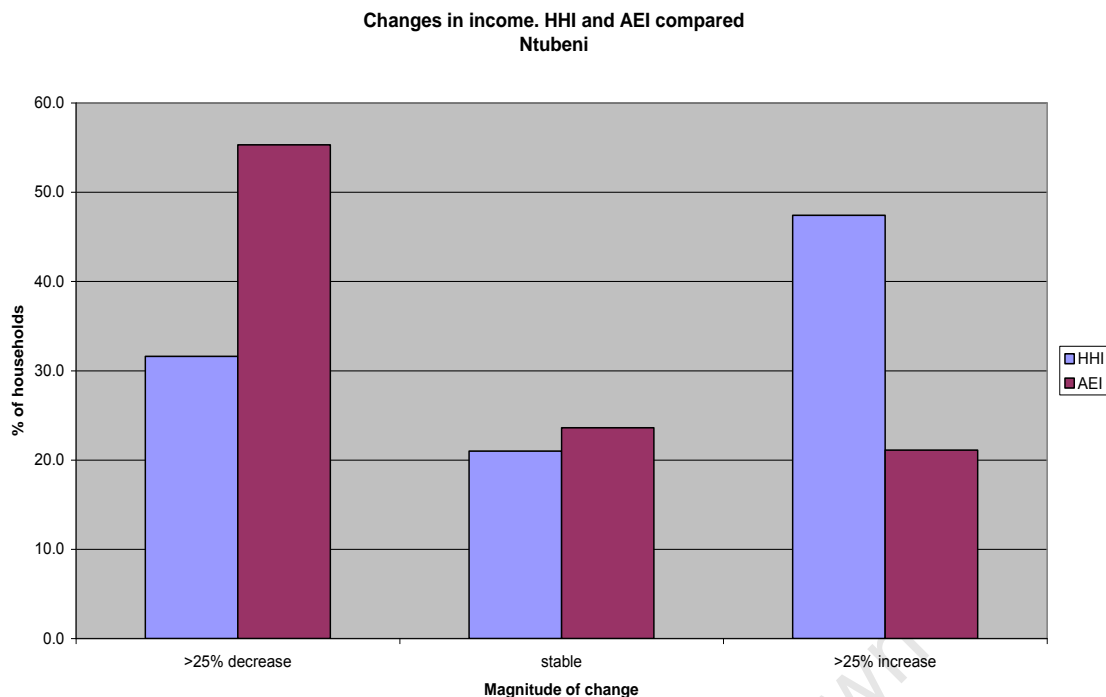
Very few households had members of an employable age who were working in 2004. Of those who were unemployed, just as many were seeking work as were not seeking work at the time the surveys were conducted. Absenteeism in Ntubeni is known to be high with many residents migrating to Cape Town in search of work. There is a bus service which travels directly from Ntubeni to Cape Town (Timmermans, 2004), and almost 80 % of

²⁴The following information is adapted from the Ntubeni data set obtained from Shackleton *et al* (2003/4).

household members who were absent at the time of the surveys were residing in Cape Town. Close to 53 % of households had someone engaged in piecework in the 12 months prior to the surveys, and nearly 19 % of household members had been paid in kind in the same period – 75 % for making bricks, all of whom received groceries/food as payment. A quarter of households sold crafts of some sort, and just over 63 % had worked on poverty alleviation projects (the majority of those individuals spent that money on purchasing groceries/food). Nearly 32 % of households received remittances from absent family members (once again, mostly used to purchase groceries/food). In fact, the Ntubeni data shows that the majority of annual household expense is on the purchase of groceries/food. In addition, almost every household paid church fees (over 80 %) whilst almost none had insurance policies or savings accounts. Furthermore, very little money was spent on agricultural inputs. Every household with a residential plot used it, and almost no households engaged in field agriculture (only two out of 39), though almost all had enlarged garden plots.

All households had access to safe drinking water as a piped water system was installed in 2002. Toilets however remained a problem, and no electricity existed at this time either²⁵. When asked for final comments, many residents requested the forests be reopened for access to valuable resources (such as fencing poles and medicinal plants, for example). Furthermore, they desired the implementation of projects that would benefit the community at large as opposed to only a few individuals.

²⁵ This has since changed.



Graph 1 – Changes in Ntubeni Incomes

Mean total household income per annum for Ntubeni households was R 7 685 in 1998 (adjusted by Timmermans by 36.5 %²⁶ = R 10 490 in 2003 terms). In 2003, mean total household income per annum was R 9 254. This shows a decrease in mean total household income per annum over the five year period. Mean total household income per month in 1998 was R 640 (or, R 874 adjusted), and R 771 in 2003. While Adult Equivalent Units increased in 57.5 % of surveyed households over these five years, Adult Equivalent Income (AEI) decreased overall, a concerning incidence. More than half (55.3 %) of the households in Ntubeni experienced a greater than 25 % decrease in AEI, 23.6 % remained stable, and 21.1 % experienced a greater than 25 % increase. Mean annual AEI was R 2 499 in 1998 (or, R 3 412 adjusted) and R 2 678 in 2003. Mean monthly AEI was R 208 in 1998 (or, R 284 adjusted) and R 223 in 2003. Graph 1 illustrates the changes in income (Household and Adult Equivalent) over the five-year period.

²⁶Rate of inflation between May 1998 and August 2003, the time frame between which the different sets of surveys were conducted.

Ownership of assets is tabulated below in Table 3. As can be seen, most households had an FM radio, a third had cellular phones²⁷ and very few households had a television set. More than half of the surveyed households had a plough, nearly half owned a planter and more than a third had a yoke. However, very few households had sledges and even fewer had maize grinders.

	NTUBENI (N = 39)
	%
Radio	64.1
Cellular phone	33.3
Television	7.7
Plough	56.4
Planter	48.7
Yoke	38.5
Ox sledge (basket/flat bed)	15.4
Maize grinder	5.1
Sewing machine	15.4

Table 3 – Ownership of Assets

3.5 Conclusion

It is evident that administrative inefficiency and a lack of political will continue to hamper any real development in the EC Province. The merging of the two former Bantustans was from the very beginning doomed to fail, as the new province inherited too many people and problems with an already insufficient administrative capacity. A history of colonialism and state intervention in the Transkei has resulted in the underdevelopment of the region, and local residents continue to be weary and distrustful of the state. After many years of being ignored, mass protest meeting of residents at Dwesa-Cwebe lead to pillaging and violence but eventually ended in a negotiated settlement and a successful land claim. Tourism

²⁷ These days, due to affordability, almost every household has a cellular phone, some even have more than one.

development was envisioned as the priority development initiative for Dwesa-Cwebe, and the future of the surrounding communities appeared bright. However, to date this achievement has not succeeded in developing the area or its people.

Livelihood diversification is necessary, as the residents of Ntubeni (as well as all other Dwesa-Cwebe CPAs) are dependent on wild natural resources, subsistence agriculture and government social assistance for their basic survival. Per capita income as well as household income decreased between 1998 and 2003. The long-term sustainability of the community is questionable, as current practices are already vastly different to what they were in the past with a greater degree of state dependency emerging while self-sufficiency diminishes. Food is now mostly purchased from the urban areas as opposed to produced locally. The next chapter focuses on this current situation.

CHAPTER 4

Case Study Findings and Discussion

A presentation and discussion of the case study findings will be the focus of Chapter 4. Each household (or unit) will be discussed independently, beginning with a demographic and socio-economic description to provide some context, followed by: (1) their assets and capabilities (or, capital), and (2) their livelihood strategies (consumption, production, income-generating activities, and the like), and then (3) the outcomes achieved by these. Transforming structures and processes also need to be discussed as they influence capabilities, strategies chosen and outcomes. A brief discussion of what these structures and processes are and how they affect both households' abilities to cope will follow the initial discussion in two sections: (1) factors that enhance livelihood security, and (2) factors that undermine livelihood security. The chapter will then conclude with the current livelihood circumstances of each household.

4.1 Introducing the Cases

The researcher selected two households from Plaatjie as the units of analysis for this case study. To obtain as much detailed information as possible regarding the different factors that either enhance or undermine rural livelihood and food security, the researcher selected two very different households²⁸, though they remained similar concerning certain eligibility criteria. These criteria included that the household have small children residing, a pensioner residing (or, disabled member, as the welfare payment received for both are the same), and that the household head be 'unemployed'²⁹. Consultation with community members and

²⁸A male-headed household and a female-headed household. Literature on food security maintains that female-headed households are more susceptible to food insecurity due to "unequal access by men and women to assets, economic opportunities, services, crisis aid, and decision-making" (FAO, 2010: 21), which makes women more vulnerable.

²⁹The researcher uses the term 'unemployed' loosely, to refer to a lack of formal, permanent salaried/paid employment; however, this is not to imply that the individual is not earned a wage in any other manner (i.e. occasional informal piecework, or employment paid in food/kind, etc.).

key informants, who were well placed to point the researcher in the right direction, identified eligible households. No household members' names are revealed in the discussion that follows. Household heads and their spouses are presented as pseudonyms. As a translator was employed for conducting interviews, all quotations that appear in the following text appear in apostrophes and not quotation marks, as they are the words of the translator and presumably not exactly as expressed by the interviewees themselves. The interviews were conducted over three separate interactions, between July and October 2011.

UNIT 1 – Mr S (Male-headed household)

Demographic and socio-economic profile

Mr S is a 62-year-old unemployed pensioner, married with four children. He lives in Plaatjie with his wife Nono³⁰ who is 53 years of age and herself unemployed. Residing in the household with Mr S and his wife are their youngest child, a son aged 14 in Grade 8, and their granddaughter (daughter to their first-born child), aged 11 and in Grade 5. Mr S's other three children (a daughter and two sons) live in Cape Town, where they migrated in search of work³¹. Neither of them has formal employment of any kind, but occasionally they do engage in piecework or informal, temporary work. They are aged 31, 28 and 24 years, with an average of a Grade 10 education, which is higher than that achieved by both Mr S (Grade 6) and Nono (Grade 8). Mr S places much emphasis on education and hopes that his youngest son will go all the way to Grade 12, especially since he can now afford it³².

Mr S is in generally good health, though he has had tuberculosis (TB) since he was a child, an illness that re-occurs every so often, as he receives no treatment. Formerly an employee at a textile factory in Butterworth (where he started in 1984), Mr S has not had formal,

³⁰ Not her real name.

³¹ The two sons moved to Kraaifontein in 2008, and the daughter moved to near Mfuleni in 1999. Both are considered poor suburbs in Cape Town.

³² Largely thanks to government social assistance and No-Fee schools.

permanent employment since the factory closed many years ago³³. The last formal wage work he engaged in was temporary work for 'the projects'³⁴, in particular the Amanz' abantu³⁵ project in 2004 which laid down the piped water system from Mpume (the adjoining CPA) to Plaatjie. Nono also worked on this project, which employed them both for one year, paying in the region of R 500 per month. They received no grants at this time, and Mr S's textile job had already ended, making these wages the chief income of the household in 2004. Currently, Nono is not engaged in any wage work, nor does she actively seek it, but Mr S performs piecework (brick-making, building) when the opportunity arises.

Assets and Capabilities

While Mr S's level of educational achievement is low, he has an array of valuable skills that benefit the household in many respects. Of the greatest benefit, are his building and brick making skills, which not only provide a secondary source of income to the household but also provide the opportunity for him to improve his residence at a lower cost than would otherwise be the case. Mr S and Nono both have craft making skills (reed/grass crafts, as well as beads to a lesser extent), though they do not spend all that much time and effort on this activity as selling such crafts is difficult (lack of market access especially). Mr S rather concentrates his efforts where the greatest benefit lies – building and making bricks to sell to others in the community. See Pictures 5 & 6.

Mr S's capacity to adapt is increased by his vast knowledge of his immediate environment. He is very aware of moon cycles and changes in weather patterns which assist him in knowing when the best time to fish or harvest are. However, at the same time, this capacity to adapt is hindered by a lack of money, infrastructure and sufficient resources. As he has lived in 'exactly this place' his entire life, he is aware of how things work, what things work

³³While Mr S could not remember the year in which the factory closed, he is certain that it was post-1994. Closure was possibly (and this is the researcher's speculation) due to the textile industry losing all state wage subsidization post-1994, which resulted in the closure of many factories in the greater Butterworth area.

³⁴'The projects' refer to Extended Public Works Programmes such as Working for Water, CoastCare, etc.

³⁵"'Water (and sanitation) for the people', in Xhosa. Amanz' abantu Services (Pty) Ltd is a private company whose shareholders include both Eastern Cape and nationally based companies, representing the full range of skills and experiences required for implementing rural water supply and sanitation projects" from the website: <http://www.aserve.co.za/index.html>].

best and how to adapt when changes occur – no matter in what respect. He also has good relations with others in the community, nurturing respect. Mr S's household can rely on others in times of need, and the reverse is true as well. Reciprocity is apparent. One respect in which Mr S's household is deficient is regarding labour power. Mr S's two older sons have migrated, leaving only his youngest child to help with physical tasks (such as building and moulding bricks). Only the granddaughter is available to assist Nono with women's tasks.

When it comes to natural capital, Mr S has the same access as the rest of the community. Water access and quality has improved significantly since the installation of the piped water system, creating less reliance on the often-unreliable natural sources (springs, streams, dams). This improved access also saves time for Nono and her granddaughter who no longer have to travel far to collect water. However, water still has to be stored in buckets as the taps are not inside the house or on the immediate property, but rather they are communal³⁶. Mr S also has no shortage of land. However, he does not utilise all his land for many reasons, the most influential being the lack of income, agricultural inputs/tools, irrigation and a depleted labour force. Kraal wood and fencing poles are available from the woodlots/headman's forests, though more abundant within the reserve, and thatch grass and reeds (while also better in the reserve) are freely available in the village commons, though these require labour and time to utilise (themselves huge costs). Game, fish and other marine resources are abundant within the reserve, though hunting, fishing and harvesting within this space are not permitted. Wild mushrooms and honey are also more abundant within the reserve, but are also found (to a lesser extent) in the village commons and are usually only opportunistically harvested.

Physical capital is where the household falls short. They have no personal form of transportation (other than walking), and no tools or technology other than a hoe, a spade, a wheelbarrow, a handsaw and building tools (spirit level, brick moulds). The residence consists of two structures – a traditional rondavel and a rectangular flat (Picture 2). Mr S is however building a third structure, the first with casement windows and a zinc roof (Pictures 4 & 15). They do have a ventilated pit toilet (as do all households in Plaatjie) and a cattle

³⁶A tap occurs every 200m, according to Basic Service Delivery stipulations.

kraal (which is unused; see Picture 11). Refer to Map 1 (below) for an aerial view of Mr S's immediate property, showing the location of the toilet, size of the garden, and the like.

A cellular phone aids communication with absent family members. There is a school nearby³⁷ which the children attend, but the nearest health facility is in Mpume (the adjoining CPA) and is almost 8 kilometres away. Both the school and the health facility are under resourced. The children do however receive meals at school through the school nutrition programme, and schooling is free, but still incurs a cost (for example, to purchase stationery and uniforms). Buses and taxis are available daily (the latter too expensive, and the former too slow), but the state of the roads makes travel to town difficult. No local markets or supermarkets exist, which means Mr S has to go to town to purchase groceries/food or any other household conveniences.

They have no access to savings³⁸ or credit, job creation programmes³⁹ or community initiatives⁴⁰. Remittances from absent family members are intermittent and when they do occur, are very little. Wages are sporadic as they come from piecework and Mr S's brick sales, which are both occasional occurrences. Jobs are scarce and travel to the urban areas to look for work is costly and time consuming. The primary source of income for the household is Mr S's Old Age Pension grant (R 1 140 per month) and the two Child Support Grants Nono receives on behalf of her son and her granddaughter (adding up to R 560 per month).

³⁷ Ntubeni Junior Secondary School.

³⁸ Other than Nono's church burial society.

³⁹ Other than Extended Public Works Programmes, which employ very few people per job.

⁴⁰ While a community garden was mentioned by many residents as something that would benefit the community at large, none exist. However, a local woman who now resides in Johannesburg has approached Mr S to utilise a piece of his land for such a project. She has provided fencing and the land has been tilled, but he is still awaiting further instructions and assistance. See Pictures 12 & 14.



Map 1 – An aerial view of Mr S's immediate property (Google Maps, 2011)

Livelihood activities

Subsistence agriculture is in the form of an enlarged home garden (Picture 3). No field agriculture is pursued. Nono is primarily responsible for the garden, though Mr S does help on occasion. Yields are seasonal, but Nono cultivates continuously throughout the year, rotating sections of the garden in an effort to regenerate the soil⁴¹. The garden produces maize (only in summer)⁴², sugar cane, cabbage, spinach, sweet potato, potato, pumpkin, bananas and guavas⁴³, all of which are for home consumption. The household does not sell what they produce. Furthermore, they still purchase vegetables from town, particularly in winter when their harvest is less. (See Pictures 8, 10 & 16). The majority of the maize the household produces is ground into flour at an establishment in Idutywa, using an electric grinder⁴⁴. While maize is grown using seeds from the previous harvest, vegetable seeds are

⁴¹ Literature suggests that soil fertility in the area is low, but residents say their soil is less sandy than the soil found in other villages.

⁴² Due to the lack of irrigation, households must wait for the rain.

⁴³ Guava trees grow wild.

⁴⁴ The electric grinder in Idutywa costs R 5 per ten liters of maize flour ground.

still occasionally purchased. Fertilizer is not used as this is too expensive, but the household may source some manure from other cattle-owning households if they need to.

Mr S has no cattle, goats, pigs or sheep. However, the household owns chickens⁴⁵, which are Nono's responsibility. She currently has 21 chicks and chickens but will rarely sell or slaughter them as they are more valuable as physical assets, or 'savings'. The household therefore also rarely eats the eggs, as Nono prefers them to hatch.

While there is game in the reserve, hunting is not allowed. Hunting is not even allowed outside of the reserve. Nevertheless, Mr S asserts that they do not like bush meat and so do not consume it ever. However, he is a keen angler and he has a subsistence-fishing permit, which allows him to go angling, collect shellfish, and harvest other important marine resources (legally) – as long as it is not within the reserve. He goes fishing whenever he has a chance, and is teaching his youngest son to fish. The household is allowed 50 black mussels per day, and Mr S or Nono collect these when they can (see Picture 9). Fishing and collecting mussels are important activities as these marine sources form an essential part of household nutrition, due largely to the fact that meat/chicken is unaffordable and impossible to store safely⁴⁶. He says crayfish are too small these days, and prawns are too scarce, so they don't bother with these anymore. He will use limpets or ollycrocks as bait, but tackle is scarce and expensive. Mr S claims that full moon and rainy season are the best times to fish and collect mussels. However, he also claims that the fish have migrated to within the reserve as they know they are safe there, and he hopes they will be able to fish within the reserve one day (as was the case in the past).⁴⁷ Mr S will sell these resources if the opportunity arises (usually to holiday makers/cottage owners over vacation time), as the income generated is more important to the households' survival and livelihood strategy.

Wild natural resource use is important (especially fuel wood and marine resources) to the survival of the household, as employment opportunities are scarce meaning money is

⁴⁵And a few cats; see Picture 13.

⁴⁶They have no means of refrigeration.

⁴⁷ The Parks Board are in the process of establishing a list of local anglers so as to assess the viability of allowing them to fish within the reserve. Personal communication with Sipho, then Manager of the Dwesa Reserve, since resigned.

scarce. Reliance on fuel wood is still great (mostly for cooking and providing heat in an imbawula)⁴⁸, and is collected from the nearby headman's forest. The only difficulty with the collection of fuel wood is transportation. As such, the household does on occasion purchase bundles of wood from others who sell, but only when they can afford this. While the household is connected to the mains electricity grid (via a prepaid meter) they cannot afford more than R 50 per month. The use of electricity is thus reserved for small electrical appliances (a two-plate stove used on occasion, the television and radio, charging cellular phones, boiling the kettle, and other such activities) as well as lighting. Paraffin is regularly used for cooking and candles for light, when electricity runs out. Reeds (to make sleeping mats or place mats) and thatch grass (for the roof) are collected from the village commons or occasionally the reserve (when permitted), but only when required. Kraal wood and fencing poles are seldom harvested (only if needed). Wild mushrooms and wild honey are opportunistically harvested. Mr S says he used to collect honey from the forests in the reserve, but he is not allowed to do so anymore. He remembers the days when residents were allowed to harvest resources from within the reserve (pre-1976), and he wishes for those days to return. Not only does he want to fish within the reserve, he also wants access to the valuable poles and medicinal plants.

Piecework (building, brick making), occasional craft or resource (fish, mussels) sales and other income generating activities (public works projects) are grabbed with both hands when the opportunity arises. The contribution made to total household income by Mr S's brick sales and building – while intermittent – cannot be underestimated.

Most of the households' monthly expenses are on the purchase of foodstuffs (maize meal, flour, tea, sugar, rice, oil, to name a few examples)⁴⁹. Mr S also spends a portion of his pension on purchasing items to build his third residence (items such as cement, window frames, slaked lime, and zinc)⁵⁰. Most of the groceries/food the household consumes is

⁴⁸An imbawula is a traditional 'fireplace'; made using a large metal container, often a paint tin, in which holes are punched. Fire is made in it, outside the home. Once the fire has died down to embers, the tin is brought inside to heat the house. Refer to Picture 7.

⁴⁹In October, the household spent R 900 on basic groceries/food stuffs.

⁵⁰He says the house will take a while to complete as he has to build piece by piece because he can only afford to purchase materials bit by bit.

purchased in town (Idutywa or Willowvale), with the exception of course being the vegetables and maize they grow themselves. One trip is made to town at the beginning of every month (when the grants are received). The trip to town takes three and a half hours each way and thus uses up an entire day. The expense means that they only go to town once (purely for supplies), but if an emergency occurs (such as the need for a specialist doctor)⁵¹ they have no choice but to make the trip again. Other necessities such as clothes or furniture are only purchased after groceries/food have been taken care of. Usually they have to save a little each month to afford such things, or Mr S has to sell more bricks. If the household runs out of food, and if they have no money to purchase more, they can send the children to family members or neighbours to ask for something to eat. Nono's association with the church allows them to seek aid there too if the need arises.

Outcomes

Subsistence agriculture, natural resource harvesting, informal piecework and government social assistance are what allow this household to secure their livelihood to the degree that they do. Mr S admitted that before grants, they could go two, three, sometimes even five, days without adequate food. And while they currently are able to feed themselves daily, they do still on occasion have to cut the size of their meals, and sometimes Mr S and/or Nono skip meals altogether. But the children are always fed first. There is little variety in what is consumed, and he wishes that they could afford 'luxuries' like soda, bread, fruit and meat. The only fruit consumed is what they grow or collect locally from the communal trees (like wild guavas), and this is usually only opportunistically done. Furthermore, what is cooked for breakfast is also eaten for lunch. When they only have maize meal left, Mr S explains how they add Aromat to make it taste better.

Mr S asserts that the households' food intake has changed over the years as food prices have increased and work (and thus a sustainable income) has become scarce, and they do not produce as much in their garden as they once did. Despite the accessibility of government social assistance they are still unable to consume the food they desire. The 'money is too little', but 'we are not dying', says Mr S almost cheerfully, preferring to view

⁵¹As was the case in September, when Mr S's youngest son required a dentist (which set them back R 88 for transport and R 200 for treatment).

the cup as half-full rather than half-empty. Mr S says he would love to be able to fish for a living. If there was a local market, or if access to the urban market was improved, he would sell his catch to earn an income. The lack of road infrastructure and market access is thus holding him back from being more self-sufficient economically.

The lack of savings, formal employment and accessibility make this household vulnerable to shocks which may occur, such as drought, floods or the death of a family member (as theory suggests). So, whilst they have food on the table on most days, the utilisation of food stuffs is insufficient to their wants and needs, the food they eat is not always nutritious and/or safe to consume, not to mention that access to and availability of sufficient food is problematic. As such, Mr S's household does not fit with the working definition of food security. They may not be chronically food insecure. However, they cannot be said to be food secure either, since they do not experience the quality of life they desire and their current livelihood practices are not sustainable, as they have no savings and they occasionally deplete their already depleted asset base, leaving them vulnerable to shocks and stressors which may occur in the future.



Picture 1 – Inside the main living area (rondavel)



Picture 2 - The two original dwellings



Picture 3 – Garden, maize plot and Maize storage



Picture 4 - The third dwelling being built



Picture 5 - Mr S digs sand from his own land to make the bricks



Picture 6 - Where the bricks are made



Picture 7 - The wood burning hut (note the red Imbawula out front)



Picture 8 - Nono's cabbages in the kitchen



Picture 9 - Mussel shells (and other trash) next to the house



Picture 10 - Cabbages growing in the garden (banana trees in the background)



Picture 11 - The Kraal (unused, no livestock other than chickens)



Picture 12 - View from the back (showing the field which is supposed to become a community garden)



Picture 13–A household cat enjoying the sun



Picture 14 - Fencing bought by 'the lady' for the community garden



Picture 15 - Mr S makes his own roof trusses



Picture 16 - Old sweet potatoes in the garden

UNIT 2 – Ms Nadine⁵² (Female-headed household)

Demographic and socio-economic profile

Ms Nadine is a 58-year-old widower who resides in Plaatjie with four of her six children, her sister and her niece. Nadine's husband – who used to work in the mines in Welkom – passed away in 1996, and she declares that things have been getting harder every year since his death. Nadine is currently unemployed, and the last formal paid work she engaged in was for the projects – specifically, the CoastCare⁵³ project in 2010. She also worked the Working

⁵² Not her real name.

⁵³ "Using poverty relief funding from the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, CoastCare provides jobs and training for unemployed people in coastal communities to create and maintain a cleaner and safer coastal environment" from website: www.environment.gov.za.

for Water⁵⁴ project a few years before that, and she unsuccessfully attempted to get more work in 2011 (a new CoastCare project was starting 1 October)⁵⁵. Nadine achieved a Grade 5 education, and although she has no major ailments she suffers from aches and pains on a daily basis.

Nadine's first born child is married and lives with her husbands' family in Mendwane (another of the Dwesa-Cwebe CPAs), and her second born lives in Cape Town, where he has been for five years in search of work. He is currently unemployed. Though he very seldom sends money home, Nadine says she nevertheless relies on these remittances⁵⁶. Nadine also has twins – a boy and a girl – aged 23, who reside in the household, both currently unemployed. Three years ago the boy lived in the Western Cape for a year (six months in Hermanus and six months in Botrivier) working on farms, but he had to return home when the work was finished because he 'could not get more'⁵⁷. The last income he received was for piecework in Cebe (a coastal, community-run campsite to the west, near Kentani), upgrading the camping area and huts in 2009⁵⁸. He received R 1200 for his labour for one month which was used to purchase groceries/food. He attained a Grade 9 education and currently spends his days herding the household's cattle. His twin sister reached, but never completed, Grade 11, though until very recently she was still trying. The nearest Senior Secondary School (SSS) is in Nqabara, which is over 20 kilometres away and thus necessitates living away from home. It is apparently not safe to stay away from home as rapes and beatings are common, and Nadine says she could not afford the rent.

Also living in the household are Nadine's two youngest children, both of whom come from different fathers, both 'ama-kwerekwere'⁵⁹ as Nadine refers to them. Neither of them

⁵⁴ "The fight against invasive alien plants is spearheaded by the Working for Water (WfW) programme, launched in 1995 and administered through the Department of Environmental Affairs. This programme works in partnership with local communities, to whom it provides jobs, and also with government departments, research foundations and private companies" from website: www.environment.gov.za.

⁵⁵ This project only employed 18 people however.

⁵⁶ Nadine has no bank account, so all remittances are sent to the daughter in Mendwane – who does have a bank account - who then has to draw the cash and get it to Nadine, which delays reception.

⁵⁷ He joined his older brother who was working on the farms at that time.

⁵⁸ Possibly 2010, he could not remember but said about two years ago.

⁵⁹ A derogatory term reserved mainly to describe black foreigners in SA. One father is from Malawi, the other Zimbabwe.

provides Nadine with any financial support, nor do they have anything to do with their children. The daughter is 11 years of age and in Grade 6. The son is 6 years old and in Grade R⁶⁰. Nadine's unemployed sister and her 16-month-old baby girl form part of the household too. She does not pay rent, as 'she is family', though she is involved in the daily activities of the household. Both she and the baby have the disorder dwarfism.

As no one in the household is currently employed, household income is primarily in the form of government social assistance, as well as the significant (though intermittent) contribution made by Nadine's craft sales and her son's occasional piecework.

Assets and Capabilities

The level of overall educational achievement in this household is low. With regards to skill capacity, Nadine is very skilled at bead work and reed crafts. Her twin son is strong and has the ability to engage in construction, which is also beneficial at times⁶¹. The household has sufficient labour power (as there are many young and capable members residing in the household), though some of the children are still too young to be put to work, and Nadine's sister's dwarfism means that no one will employ her. She does however contribute significantly to daily household tasks, freeing up time for Nadine to engage in craft work, to work in the garden, or to harvest natural resources. The household has very little capacity to adapt as money and tools are scarce to say the least. However, Nadine and her twin son appear to have sufficient knowledge regarding their natural environment, allowing them to know what is coming, what to expect and how to cope as best they can. Nadine has family just up the hill, which she can really on in times of need. She is also an active member of the church which provides much needed support when needed. Nadine respects local custom and tradition. Being a woman, Nadine has to ask for permission to do certain things. For example, the cattle she owns belonged to her late husband, and if she wishes to sell or slaughter any she has to ask permission from his uncles and other male family members before she does so. When her husband passed away, for reasons still unclear, Nadine did not inherit his land. She moved to her current location and had to ask permission to sell two

⁶⁰Both attend Ntubeni Junior Secondary School.

⁶¹Piece work is scarce however.

head of cattle⁶² to afford to build the current residence. She appeared to have no problem being allocated a piece of land however. Reciprocity is very apparent, as Nadine helps others as much as they help her.

When it comes to natural capital, Nadine has the same access as the rest of the community. Water access is via the piped water system, which Nadine says has saved her a lot of time as she no longer has to walk the distance to the spring to collect water. She also says her children get less sick now than in the past as the water is clean and safe to drink. Water still has to be stored in buckets as the taps are not inside the house or on the immediate property. Nadine does not utilise all her available land as she does not have sufficient means to do so. Her maize plot however is significantly larger than most other households, probably due to the fact that she owns cattle⁶³. Fuel wood is collected from the headman's forest, reeds and thatch from within the reserve (when permitted), and grazing is on communal land and is said not to pose any problems. Harvesting of marine resources is limited to the one kilometre stretch of coastline between Dwesa and Nqabara River. Game is located predominantly within the reserve, but they do not hunt.

Physical capital is where this household appears diminished in capacity. They have no personal form of transportation other than walking, and no tools or technology other than a hoe, two handsaws and a maize crusher. The residence consists of three structures – a traditional rondavel and two rectangular flats (see Pictures 17 & 18). The rondavel acts as the main residence (where cooking, eating, socialising, craft work, and the like occur), and is also where Nadine and her daughters sleep. The boys sleep in the one flat, and Nadine's sister and the baby sleep in the other flat. There is also a cattle kraal and wood burning hut (see Pictures 19, 25, 26 & 27). Refer to Map 2 (below) for an aerial view of Nadine's immediate property, showing the location of the toilet, size of the garden, and the like.

Cellular phones aid communication. The children attend the nearby Junior Secondary School, and once again the nearest health facility is in Mpume (the adjoining CPA), almost 8

⁶²Thus depleting her asset base.

⁶³ Though she does not own a plough or sledge, Nadine engages in work parties (*ilima*). Her contribution of cattle to the occasion is of significant benefit to the household.

kilometres away. The children receive meals at school through the school nutrition programme, and schooling is free, but still incurs a cost (stationery and uniforms, for example) which Nadine says is too much. Buses are again the most popular form of transport to town as they are cheaper than taxis, and both run daily. No supermarkets or markets exist locally, though Nadine does make use of the local 'Spaza'⁶⁴ shop in times of need. Nadine and her sister go to the urban areas for groceries/food and other supplies. If necessary, also for medical/health reasons. The children rarely appear to leave the rural area (unless for medical/health reasons).

Nadine has no access to savings⁶⁵ or credit⁶⁶, job creation programmes⁶⁷ or community initiatives. Remittances from absent family members are intermittent and when they do occur, are very little. But they remain important and appreciated. Wages too are sporadic, as they come from craft sales and the occasional piecework Nadine's son obtains. Nadine says they cannot travel to the urban areas to look for work as they cannot afford the cost involved. Not to mention that the likelihood of her finding a job due to her age is low, and her sister's disability affects her ability to find work. While the twins are of working age, they say jobs are near impossible to find in the local urban areas. The primary source of income for the household is obtained from the two Child Support Grants Nadine receives (adding up to R 560 per month) for her two youngest children, as well as her sister's Permanent disability grant and the grant she receives for her baby (totalling R 1 400 per month). This money is not pooled together, but Nadine's sister does contribute to household food expenditure. Nadine says she cannot wait until she turns 60 so that she can access a pension grant. The extra R 1 140 will make the biggest difference to the household's income.

⁶⁴ A Spaza shop is an informal convenience business, usually run from a home. They also serve the purpose of supplementing household incomes of the owners, selling everyday small household items. These shops grew as a result of sprawling townships that made travel to formal shopping places more difficult or expensive.

⁶⁵ Other than her church burial society.

⁶⁶ Though her cattle are a form of credit, but one which she reluctantly relinquishes.

⁶⁷ Other than Extended Public Works Programmes, which employ very few people per job.



Map 2 – An aerial view of Nadine's immediate property (Google Maps, 2011)

Livelihood activities

Whilst Nadine admits that she has a 'very small' garden, producing 'very little' (in terms of both quantity and variety), she says that it is very important to the nutrition of the household, as she cannot afford to purchase all of the vegetables they consume. Nadine cultivates maize, cabbage, pumpkins, spinach, sweet potato, potato and occasionally spring onion (not all at the same time). (See Pictures 21 & 22). Maize is only grown in the summer months (rainy season) as there is no irrigation (see picture 23). All produce is for home consumption. None is sold, as it is barely enough for the household as it is. They participate in work parties (*Ilima*). Nadine supplies her cattle and sometimes the children (the girls in particular) will cook food for the party. She in return gets access to a plough, sledge and other implements. Nadine has four head of cattle, but none are bulls. They no longer produce milk, though they once did. She will never slaughter them outside of ritual, as this is not permitted within her Xhosa community. Nadine cannot make the decision to slaughter or sell her cattle on her own.

Marine resources are an important source of protein for the household, especially mussels. Nadine collects black mussels whenever she can, and her son goes angling on occasion but has insufficient gear to do so regularly. He too claims that full moon and rainy season are the best times to fish. Any marine resources obtained are for household consumption. They never sell, though they may purchase the occasional fish if they can afford to. They seldom eat chicken⁶⁸ and almost never meat (unless at a ceremony/ritual as her daughter does not like red meat). While there is plenty of game within the reserve, no one hunts - although Nadine says her twin son used to shoot the occasional bird with a catty when he was young. Wild mushrooms and wild honey are opportunistically harvested, when in season.

Fuel wood reduces the household's expense on energy and is thus very important and always sought. Fuel wood is the primary source of energy and heat used. While the household is connected to the mains electricity grid (via a prepaid meter) they cannot afford more than R 20 per month. The use of electricity is thus reserved mainly for lighting (only available in the main rondavel) and for small electrical appliances (a radio, charging cellular phones and boiling the kettle, though often water is still boiled on the fire to save electricity). When the household runs out of electricity, they use candles. Paraffin is also used sparingly as Nadine says it is too expensive.

Reeds (see picture 28) harvested from within the reserve (when permitted, May through August) are an important source of income for the household as Nadine makes crafts from these (primarily sleeping mats of various sizes) and sells them to hawkers in Idutywa⁶⁹. She also makes the occasional grass basket. She purchases beads from Idutywa to make bead work which she also sells to the urban hawkers. Nadine says that during vacation time (in particular Christmas and Easter holidays) she can make as much as R 500 per month selling her beads to tourists/cottage owners. Her son makes the occasional grass broom to sell locally to residents (at R 20 per broom). The majority of this extra income earned goes towards the purchase of groceries/food. Thatch grass is also collected from the reserve, but only when required. Kraal wood and fencing poles are also only collected when required.

⁶⁸ Due to storage issues as well as availability.

⁶⁹ Once a month, when she travels to town to do a grocery shop.

Most of the households' monthly expenses are towards purchasing food stuffs (maize meal, flour, tea, sugar, rice). One trip is made to town at the beginning of every month (when the grants are received). Other necessities, such as clothes or furniture for example, are only purchased after groceries/food has been taken care of and if there is money to spare. Nadine says they have to save to be able to afford such things as clothes, school uniforms, stationery, and furniture, as she spends her full R 520 from the child support grants on groceries/food. However, if Nadine is in desperate need of cash she makes more crafts to sell. Due to the fact that the reserve is only open to harvesting for four months, Nadine concentrates her efforts on reed crafts during this period (May through August), making more bead work the rest of the year. Nadine describes the relationship she has with the local 'Spaza' shop owner. When they run out of food, and have no money to purchase more, he allows her to take some food items on credit (and he charges no interest) and repay it the following month when she goes to town to sell her crafts for an income. Sometimes he even offers to take her crafts to town for her to sell. While this relationship is beneficial to Nadine in times of need, the food purchased on loan at the 'Spaza' shop is more expensive and, as such, Nadine prefers not to do this. She admits to resorting to this measure more often than she would like, but asserts that since they have started receiving grants she does so less often than in the past. This is but one indication of the reality that Nadine does not bring in enough income to purchase enough food most months, nor does she produce adequate food (in terms of quantity and quality) herself.

Outcomes

The household evidently struggles to meet its daily food needs. They do not eat breakfast, as they do not have enough money. Tea in the morning constitutes breakfast. One pot of food is cooked at lunchtime⁷⁰ and constitutes both lunch and dinner. There is very little variety, but not by choice. Nadine says she would love to eat other, 'better' foods but they just cannot afford to. The household grows most of the vegetables they eat, but they do still have to buy from town (especially in winter when they cultivate less). The maize Nadine grows is crushed (by herself) and used for *umngqusho* (see Picture 24 for maize crusher). When asked if they would be hungry if she did not have a vegetable garden, Nadine replied

⁷⁰ Usually *umngqusho* (samp and beans), *umfino* (maize meal and wild leaves), or rice and vegetables.

that they would be 'starving'. Marine resources (in particular, mussels) also make an important contribution to household food and nutrition as a substitute for meat. While consumed weekly, how many days per week depends on time and labour availability of the household, as well as season (weather permitting).

The children will always be fed first when food is scarce, as 'they must grow'. Nadine says she does not 'feel okay' when the children tell her they are hungry, but what can she do⁷¹. The two younger children receive meals at school, which contributes to their nutrition and relieves some pressure on the household. If the household runs out of food, the children can go to family or friends and ask for food⁷². (See Pictures 20 & 29). Nadine says that they need better roads, or supermarkets in their community, because to access sufficient food is difficult and expensive. A community garden or a local market is also desired; if they could buy and trade locally, it would save them money, time, and make their lives generally better. She says food is too expensive and getting more expensive every month – yet, their money does not increase. This means that they buy less food, and have to eat less. According to Nadine, running out of food happens 'because there is no money'; because there are 'no jobs'. They 'need jobs to buy food'. Furthermore, petrol goes up and the buses increase their fares, and paraffin increases too. Yet their grants do not increase and jobs are not made available.

Using the working definition of food security adopted for this thesis, Nadine's household is not only *not* food secure, they are less so than Mr S's household. The researcher would not like to speculate that this has anything to do with the fact that this is a female-headed household⁷³. However, being a woman does mean that Nadine has less in the sense of personal entitlements. She also requires permission to make certain decisions/choices concerning her cattle (the only real capital owned), meaning that at the end of the day, she does not have full autonomy over her assets and thus the activities she engages in. They do not consume the foods they desire, nor do they consume what they have in sufficient

⁷¹She says 'all the time they are hungry'; they tell her they are hungry every day and she is hungry too. The children do not get enough food to grow, according to Nadine.

⁷²The opposite occurs too – other children (usually cousins) were present at the household for lunch on a few occasions during interviews. The children normally share a bowl of food between them.

⁷³Luthando asserts that 'woman have too many rights' these days, things are not the same.

quantities. There is also very little variety and thus little nutritional adequacy in the food they consume.



Picture 17 - Two of the three dwellings, reeds in the sun, drying



Picture 18 – The third dwelling



Picture 19 – Wood stockpile, burning hut and the Outside cooking area; toilet in the background



Picture 20 – Kids sharing lunch (rice & veg)



Picture 21 – The garden on first visit (overgrown)



Picture 22 - Upon return for second visit (cleared)



Picture 23 – Field where maize is grown (to the left and to the right)



Picture 24 – Maize crusher



25 – Using fire to boil water for tea



Picture 26 - Kraal on first visit (overgrown)



Picture 27 - Kraal upon return (cleared)



Picture 28 – Reeds drying in the sun



Picture 29 - Baby with (old) Maize

4.2 Transforming structures and processes

The sustainable livelihoods framework asserts that livelihood strategies and outcomes are not just dependent on access to assets or constrained by the vulnerability context, but also transformed by the environment of structures (levels of government, private sector) and processes (laws, policies, culture, institutions) (Scoones, 1998). The sustainable livelihoods framework therefore helps make clear the different factors that constrain or enhance livelihood opportunities and shows how they relate to one another. These will be explored below.

4.2.1 Factors that enhance livelihood opportunities

Government social assistance (welfare grants)

The welfare grants system – intended to alleviate poverty – is without a doubt the saving grace of many impoverished households and individuals, not only in Plaatjie but in South Africa in general. The sole incomes for many, welfare grants enhance livelihood opportunities by providing a disposable income to purchase household necessities (in particular, groceries/food). The current situation is one where subsistence agriculture is not as productive as it once was, supplying more of a secondary source of food to supplement household nutrition than acting as the primary source of household food, making this disposable income very important. Welfare grants lift households out of adverse poverty

and allow them to secure their livelihoods to a greater degree than would otherwise be the case, thus reducing vulnerability to food insecurity.

Clean, free, piped water

Not only has piped water access freed up time for other household tasks, and provided a steady and reliable supply of water, but most importantly it has reduced the incidence of children getting ill by drinking dirty, contaminated water. From a health and sanitation perspective, piped water is important and has improved the lives of many poor, rural households.

Connection to the mains electricity grid

Access to electricity has benefitted households in many respects. But probably one of the greatest ways in which it is a benefit is from a health and safety perspective. Health wise, less paraffin fumes are being consumed by household members (in particular, the children). Safety wise, there is less chance of a fire occurring and of the residence subsequently burning down.

The School Nutrition Programme and free primary education

An empty stomach equals an empty mind. It is difficult for children to concentrate when they are hungry and undernourished. The school nutrition programme helps nourish children so that they can learn. It also helps relieve some of the pressure from the household head who battles to sufficiently feed his/her children. No-fee schools also free up disposable income for other household needs, and also mean that children tend to attend school at least at the foundation phase.

Abundance of marine and other wild natural resources

The one kilometre stretch of rocky shore provides access to fish and shellfish, the latter an important source of protein to the household. All households who are interested in harvesting these resources are required to be in possession of a subsistence licence, but this is provided free from the government on an annual basis. The use of wild natural resources (such as fuel wood, kraal wood, sand and clay for building purposes, wild fruits and vegetables for household food consumption, etc.) also frees up disposable income for other

household necessities, and sometimes also provides an extra source of income (for example reeds, when used to make crafts). The use of wild natural resources is widespread in Plaatjie.

Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)

The jobs created by the 'projects' are often the only form of local wage work available, though no skills training accompanies these projects⁷⁴ and, furthermore, they employ very few people at a time.

4.2.2 Factors that constrain livelihood opportunities

Lack of road infrastructure

The lack of decent roads is – in this researcher's opinion – the greatest injustice to the residents of the Dwesa-Cwebe area in general! Not only does it isolate these communities from the rest of the world, it also cuts off access to essential livelihood resources (jobs, health, food, etc.). The repercussions of not being able to access essential needs or items relates to a reduced quality of life and increased vulnerability to shocks and stressors.

Lack of extension (agricultural or credit), skills training, and information and technology services

While agriculture has decreased, and is now mainly a secondary source of food to many households, if extension was provided households would be able to produce more vegetables and maize, freeing up more disposable income for other essential household items and needs. While both households in this case study have skills to some degree, skills' training is almost completely absent from the area. Cellular phones provide much needed communication, but information is restricted to what comes through via an FM radio. Technology (or, ICT in general) is absent.

No jobs, no money, no savings

The lack of employment opportunities and thus income is creating a high degree of dependency on the state, particularly through social assistance grants. Such dependency

⁷⁴ Although this is supposed to accompany these jobs.

and lack of self-sufficiency creates more vulnerability as it destabilises the realisation of sustainable livelihoods. If livelihoods are not sustainable, food security cannot exist. South Africa is not a welfare state. Trevor Manuel and Jacob Zuma have both publicly stated that the social grants system is not sustainable in the long term. They thus need to be accompanied by other development initiatives that allow individuals to further themselves financially. Grants are supposed to be a short term measure to help lift people out of poverty. However, they have become the primary source of income for many households, used primarily to purchase groceries/food and therefore not contributing to economic activity or growth (as intended).

No local market, supermarket or community garden

The lack of local supermarkets or markets (where residents could trade with one another to generate an income) exacerbates access to and availability of food and employment and/or income generating opportunities. These things are sought by the residents of Plaatjie, but are however not provided.

Reduced access to Reserve resources

The reserve holds many valuable resources – valuable not only from a livelihoods perspective, but also from a cultural relevance perspective. Withholding access to the resources that belong to the people who desperately need and want them only serves to increase tensions between authorities and residents who are already distrustful of the state. Furthermore, expenses could be reduced if residents had access to certain resources and greater incomes could be generated too.

Lack of a co-management agreement

Dwesa-Cwebe communities are supposed to manage the reserve, through the Dwesa-Cwebe Land Trust, in collaboration with parks officials. Furthermore, tourism is supposed to be developed to provide for the communities who rightfully own the land. However, since no co-management agreement yet exists (due to in-fighting, back-stabbing, and outsider interference) residents continue to be excluded and benefit very little from the reserve. One could even argue that the reserve exists to the detriment of local residents.

4.3 Conclusion

According to the working definition of food security adopted in this thesis, neither of the two households could be said to be food secure, as not all of the four dimensions of food security - access, availability, utilisation and stability of availability and access - have been met. There is food on the table, and no one in the two households is starving. However, neither household lives the quality of life that they desire. Government social assistance is indispensable, and has helped lift these households out of adverse poverty. Nevertheless, the long-term sustainability of these welfare grants is questioned. While not directly expressed, the researcher gets the impression that these households do not try to locate work as actively as they perhaps did in the past as they can afford to be a little more lax now that they have some guaranteed income through the grants system. The road infrastructure of course also relates to the decreased effort to search for work in the urban areas. It also affects the accessibility of food and essential services. Nevertheless, the point remains that grants provide some form of food and livelihood security for households, as does the use of wild natural resources. However, both could contribute far more than they presently do (in terms of livelihood security), if they were accompanied by market access, credit, extension, and general economic development initiatives.

CHAPTER 5

Concluding remarks

This thesis has revealed that livelihood diversification is a coping mechanism adopted by rural households in Plaatjie as a way of diminishing vulnerability to livelihood and food insecurity. Government social assistance (through the welfare grants system) proves to be an indispensable form of primary income for the majority of households. Agriculture is pursued as a secondary source of food as most food is now purchased from urban supermarkets (unlike in the past when rural areas were distinguished as places where food was mostly produced by households themselves). No local wage-generating opportunities are available other than Extended Public Works Projects (which employ very few people and on a short term, temporary basis), and there is also very little (almost no) private enterprise in the area, other than the occasional 'Spaza' shop. Residents therefore engage in informal piecework, with very few engaging in small scale trade in agricultural produce, wild natural resources or crafts. The use of wild natural resources (for personal utilization) is still widespread, and marine resources play a particularly important role in household food and livelihood security in Plaatjie.

This final chapter will revisit some of the assumptions made in the literature and relate them to the findings of this particular case study, after which point a discussion on inequality in South Africa will ensue and a concluding argument made.

5.1 The hypotheses and the findings: do they relate?

Let us return to Devereux and Maxwell (2003, in Hart, 2009) and their discussion around the major paradigm shifts in the thinking about food (in)security. They highlight three major shifts – first, a shift from National to household and individual food security; second, a shift from a 'food-first' to a livelihoods perspective; and third, a shift in the use of only objective indicators to the inclusion of subjective perceptions in determining food security.

The first shift occurred around the time when the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) developed an approach more focused on the balance between the demand for and the supply of food (Hart, 2009: 9). This approach was developed in relation to the work produced by Amartya Sen (1981) which highlighted the effect of personal entitlements (resources used for production, labour, trade and transfers) in ensuring access to food (Hart, 2009). The cases in this study highlight the importance of this shift. The lack of personal entitlements has a definitive negative effect on households in Plaatjie. The lack of agricultural extension reduces agricultural production, as does insufficient labour power, for example. The fact that no major local market for trade exists, or that income generating opportunities in general are few, also affect access to sufficient food. The gendered dimensions of food (in)security could also be discussed here. Remember Reddy and Moletsane (2009) highlight that households headed by women (and the elderly) have the highest rates of food insecurity in South Africa because of their lack of such 'entitlements'. Aphane, Dzivakwi and Jacobs (2010) also highlight that the food buying patterns of female headed households in rural EC differ to that of male headed households in the same region, in the sense that the former have lower food and total household expenditures than the latter. Once again, it is a question of personal entitlements such as sufficient resources necessary for production, labour, trade and transfers. This study does indicate that the female headed household of Ms Nadine has less personal entitlements and also a lower food and total household expenditure than Mr S., and that as a result they are also more food insecure.

The second shift in the thinking about food (in)security, when the focus moved to poverty, "reinforcing the idea that a livelihoods perspective, rather than a food-first perspective, was a more accurate way of looking at food security" (Maxwell, 2003, in Hart, 2009: 10) is also an important shift in relation to the findings of this study. Chambers and Conway (1991) popularised livelihoods approaches, highlighting the importance of vulnerability and of coping with and managing risk. Households with fewer assets required to cope with shocks or gradual changes will be forced to deplete their limited asset base, increasing their vulnerability to and experience of food insecurity (Hart, 2009: 14). Once again it is a question of entitlements.

This is what led de Klerk *et al* (2004) to assert that the issue of food insecurity is not essentially agricultural, but rather that it has more to do with total household income. Because these households no longer produce the majority of the food they consume but rather now purchase it, they are more dependent than ever on an income. However, the high unemployment rate and severe lack of local income generating opportunities have resulted in an increased dependence on government social assistance. As a matter of fact, de Klerk *et al* (2004) even claimed that a short term solution to the issue of food insecurity would thus be an increase in grants and food parcels to the food insecure. And there is no denying the importance of these grants and the contribution they have made to the food security status of households in Plaatjie (and the country at large). However, it is important to remember that these are short term measures and not lasting solutions to the problem.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) remind us that the increases we have already experienced in food and oil prices will continue into the future. The result, they claim, will be that poor households will be forced to allocate more of their expenditure to food, leaving less disposable income for other cash needs. The findings from this case study add truth to this assumption. At the end of the day, households in Plaatjie are spending more on food (a result both of the decrease in agricultural practices in the area and an increase in food and oil prices nationally and globally) whilst getting less than in the past; getting less than sufficient food to provide for the household needs. Over the past ten years, the petrol price in South Africa has increased – on average – by 11% per annum. The effects of such sharp increases are evident.

The third shift in thinking about food (in)security was the change in using only objective indicators (such as nutritional status and anthropometric indicators) in determining food security to the inclusion of the subjective perceptions of those affected. Hart (2009: 15-16) asserts that such objective measures are problematic in that they do not take into account that people don't only have the right to food but also they have the right to choose the type of food they want to consume and how they wish to do so (also known as food preferences).

At this stage it is probably best to revisit the definition of food security adopted by the South African Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS):

Universal physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life (2002: 6).

The findings clearly highlight that households of Plaatjie are not food secure. First, because they do not have sufficient access to safe and nutritious food, especially not at all times. Second, because the households do not have access to the types of food that meet either their dietary or food preferences. And third, because the households also do not have access to enough of the right types of food to enable them to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. As already stated early on in this study, even though households in Plaatjie may not be chronically food insecure, according to this working definition of food security adopted by our own government, they still cannot be considered to be food secure.

Welfare grant amounts do not increase sufficiently to meet the increases experienced in the price of food and other necessary household items. Yet, households rely on these grants, and for some they are the only income they receive. If this income is insufficient to purchase food stuffs, then households will sink deeper and deeper into food insecurity, whilst also becoming more vulnerable to shocks and stressors, as they have no savings, capital, assets or resources to pull themselves out of this poverty rut. Scanlan is thus very much correct when he asserts that food insecurity “has more to do with inequality than anything else” (2003: 89).

5.2 Concluding remarks

So what does all this mean for the food security status of households? In Plaatjie, many households purchase the majority of their food stuffs. If they have no income, this poses serious problems to their food security status. Not having jobs results in having no income which in turn means having no food, but at least they have welfare grants from government which save the day. However, these grants are not a long term measure and they are most definitely not a lasting solution to the problem. Households and individuals need to be self-sustainable. The only way to ensure this is to provide them with opportunities with which they can develop their human capital and other assets (financial and physical), thereby

enabling them to reach their full potential in life. This in turn requires that all individuals have access to a set of goods and services, important being education, health and infrastructure. However, without equitable access to such goods and services from an early age, the cycle of inequality will persist into the child's adult life. As the World Bank states, "This raises the prospect of a vicious cycle of adverse circumstances that compounds inequalities over multiple stages in life, and over the lives of multiple generations" (2012: xii). More and more individuals and households will become dependent on state welfare, and thus never escape the wrath of food and livelihood insecurity unless we begin to address the larger and more pressing issue of inequality of opportunity. Social welfare is not enough to address the challenge; we need a special focus on human capital development. Interventions that equalize opportunities earlier in life are much more cost-effective than those later in life.

5.3 Inequality in South Africa – future research focus?

According to the World Bank's latest six-monthly economic update on South Africa ('South Africa Economic Update: Focus on Inequality of Opportunity', July 2012), it is one of the most unequal societies in the world (p. 15). South Africa has the highest income inequality in the world, with a Gini coefficient of 63.6% in 2011. The top decile of the country's population accounts for close to 60% of the country's income, with the bottom decile accounting for a mere half a percent (*Ibid*: 15-16). "In large part, this is an enduring legacy of the apartheid system, which denied the non-whites (especially Africans) the chance to accumulate capital in any form" (*Ibid*: 16). However, that apartheid bred inequality in South Africa is a cliché that we ought to be wary of. Post-apartheid South Africa hasn't fared too well either.

Probably the biggest problem facing South Africa is the country's inability to create sufficient jobs to absorb new entrants to the labour market. The labour force continues to increase as employment continues to decrease. This inability to create employment opportunities on a large enough scale is what the World Bank claims lies at the heart of the high inequality in SA. South Africa has one of the highest unemployment rates in the world (over 25%). This rate is even higher (closer to 40%) if we take into consideration 'discouraged' workers. Although South Africa has experienced an increase in per capita GDP since the emergence of

a new government, the country has experienced only modest reductions in poverty. Without the increase in social assistance grants experienced over this period, one could question whether this modest reduction would even have been possible. According to the World Bank, “financial transfers from the budget account for more than 70 percent of the income of the bottom quintile” (2012: 16), and without these grants, “two-fifths of the population would have seen its income decline in the first decade after apartheid” (*ibid.*). However, even after taking social assistance into consideration, income inequality in South Africa remains extremely high. The World Bank echoes what has already been suggested in this paper: to reduce this inequality in incomes over the long run, social assistance needs to be accompanied by other initiatives which focus on human capital development. It is a question of equity (justice, fairness and impartiality) rather than equality (equal sharing or exact division). It is not just the lack of jobs but the inequality that persists between different groups in their access to the few available jobs that really needs to be addressed. “The causes of inequality in labour markets have changed in the past four years”, claims the World Bank, “[with the] contribution of education [increasing], while that of circumstances of gender and ethnicity has fallen slightly. Where a person seeking employment lives, however, matters more now than it did four years ago” (2012: 37). So education and location now play a more important role in an individuals’ ability to reach their full potential and lead a better quality life. An individual’s circumstances clearly dictate (to some degree) the opportunities made available to them, and thus their ability to advance their future. Relating this to the study of households in Plaatjie, one can easily understand the severity of the state of affairs found there. The youth of this area stand very little chance of reaching their full potential and attaining a better quality life unless some major changes occur.

The World Bank thus examines the notion of inequality of opportunity and provides a structural argument for equity. They claim that “access to a basic set of goods and services during childhood can be an important (if far from perfect) predictor of future outcomes, including education achievements and earnings” (2012: 17), as such access – irrespective of the individuals’ background – could provide them with the opportunity to advance and reach their potential. The World Bank report uses the Human Opportunity Index (HOI) to measure opportunities among children, in an attempt to “help better understand the nature and causes of inequality of outcomes observed among adults” (*ibid.*). The HOI is “the

coverage rate of a particular basic service adjusted by how equitably the service is distributed among groups differentiated by circumstances” (*Ibid*: 19).

What the report found is that in SA, the circumstances that a child is born into (ethnicity, location, gender, etc.) variably affect their access to basic opportunities (2012: xii). Furthermore, the report found that some of these circumstances (for example, location) continue to influence inequality in employment opportunities later in the child’s life (*Ibid.*). The World Bank thus suggests that SA take the HOI into consideration when developing social policy as it can help improve the targeting and efficacy of such policy. “Policy design needs to recognise that children of certain circumstances are vulnerable to deprivations in multiple dimensions simultaneously [...] The presence of multiple deprivations points to the need for policy programmes in different sectors ... to coordinate closely in order to achieve better efficiency and the best results” (*Ibid*: xii-xiii).

Upon reflection, this thesis should perhaps have investigated this issue of inequality of opportunity and what effect it may have on livelihood and food (in)security later on in an individuals’ life. Such insight may better influence policy by highlighting the need for an integrated, inter-sectoral approach.

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APPENDIX A

Preliminary Screening Questionnaire

The following questions are imitative of the Hunger Scale Questionnaire (HSQ) developed by Gericke, Labadarios and Nel (for the 1999 National Food Consumption Survey). The HSQ provided information on the caregiver's perception of whether hunger was experienced in the HH and by the child.

Household level insecurity

Food uncertainty component

Q1 Does your household ever run out of money to buy food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Qualitative component

Q2 Do you ever rely on a limited number of foods to feed your children because you are running out of money to buy food for a meal?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Individual level security

Quantitative component

Q3 Do you ever cut the size of meals or skip because there is not enough money for food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Q4 Do you ever eat less than you should because there is not enough money for food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Child hunger

Quantitative component

Q5 Do your children ever eat less than you feel they should because there is not enough money for food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Q6 Do your children ever say they are hungry because there is not enough food in the house?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Q7 Do you ever cut the size of your children's meals or do they ever skip meals because there is not enough money to buy food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Q8 Do any of your children ever go to bed hungry because there is not enough money to buy food?

- (a) Has this happened in the past 30 days?
- (b) Has this happened 5 or more days in the past 30 days?

Five affirmative responses out of the possible eight indicates that everyone in the household is affected by a food shortage problem and the household can therefore be considered "hungry". A score of one to four indicates the household is at "risk of hunger". Depending on the frequency of negative responses, one could possibly assume the household is food secure.

APPENDIX B

HOUSEHOLD DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFORMATION TEMPLATE

PROVIDE INFORMATION FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD, WHETHER CURRENTLY RESIDING OR ABSENT FOR ANY REASON															
NAME	AGE	GEN DER	CUR RENT LY RESI DING IN HH (Y/N)	RELATIO N TO HEAD OF HH	HEALT H STATU S	HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL ACHIEVED (if still in school, what grade currently doing; if dropped out, why?)	DOES – RECEIVE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT GRANTS: (TICK ALL THAT APPLY)								
							OLD AGE PENSI ON	DISABI LITY GRANT	CHILD SUPPORT GRANT		FOSTER CARE GRANT		CARE DEPENDENCY GRANT		NO GRANT S
									GRANT HOLDER	CHILD	GRANT HOLDER	CHILD	GRANT HOLDR	CHILD	

ASK ONLY OF WORKING AGE MEMBERS

NAME	HAS – WORKE D FOR PAY OR HH GAIN IN THE LAST MONTH ? (Y/N)	IF YES, WHAT WAS –’S TOTAL PAY FOR ALL WORK IN THE LAST MONTH?	HOW MUCH DOES –’S WORK CONTRIBUTE TO THE TOTAL MONTHLY HH INCOME? (Very significantly, significantly, somewhat, a little, not much)	WHAT KIND OF WORK DOES – DO IN HIS/HER MAIN CURRENT JOB?	IS THIS PART- TIME, FULL- TIME OR SELF- EMPLOYMENT ?	IS THIS LOCAL WORK OR DOES – HAVE TO MIGRATE?	IF NOT WORKIN G, DID – LOOK FOR WORK IN THE LAST MONTH ? (Y/N)	IF NOT LOOKING FOR WORK, WHAT IS THE REASON WHY NOT?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Socio-economic and demographic information of household and individuals
 - Gender, age, education, health (like child malnutrition – repeated diarrhoea is likely to result in malnourishment), employment, social welfare services received, etc. Who in the household is economically active and who is not. Those that are, are they currently working or unemployed? Full-time; part-time or self-employed?
- Information on dwelling and basic services
 - Is dwelling: traditional hut or brick house? Own yard/garden? Size of land? Is it owned or leased? Etc.
 - Access to water (tapped/piped; rainwater tank/public tap/well/spring/dam/borehole/stream) and location (on site or off site) – if not on site, then how long does it take to get water; electricity (what do they otherwise use (gas paraffin wood coal dung candles) for cooking, heating, lighting?); hygienic sanitation (is toilet flush, chemical, pit latrine or bucket?) and is it on or off site, and if off site how long does it take to get to the nearest one; refuse removal (how often and method used); information and communication (telephone access?) and how long to nearest; postal services; etc. In addition, find out what services are provided (other than grants – like job creation/poverty relief, etc).
- Information on transport services (by foot, bicycle, taxis, buses?)
 - To nearest clinic/hospital; schools; markets/shops; welfare offices; banks; reaching the nearest public transport. Cost/time involved in getting to these places?
- Household assets, income and expenditure.
 - Do they have access to land for agriculture? How much? Good/bad land? What type of access – own, rent, sharecropping, tribal authority, provides labour, free, etc.

- Farming activity – field crops, horticulture, livestock, fruit? For home or market? Inputs?
- Grants received? Pension; disability; child support; care dependency; foster care; grant in aid; social relief.
- Types of assets owned – cattle or other large livestock; sheep, goats and other medium sized animals; poultry; car/truck; motorcycle; bicycle; tractor; plough; radio/television; bed; books; watch/clock; etc.
- Source of income – salaries/wages; remittances; pensions/grants; sales from agriculture; other non farm activities.
- total household expenditure for the month prior to the interview: Compared with the national/regional figures (R1-399; R400-799; R800-1199; R1200-1799; R1800-2499; R2500-4999; R5000-9999; R10000 or more; DK; refused; unspecified.
- The extent to which they had problems satisfying their food needs – never; seldom; sometimes; often; always.
- Has anyone left the household (urbanisation/migration?) and reason for doing so?
- Other activities – harvesting wild natural resources (home or market use); what types and how often and inside reserve?

Then:

- What changes in their resource base or the weather or political/social and how have these affected the household/individuals in relation to securing food? How do they adapt/cope? The effects of these strategies on the sustainability of their livelihoods? Etc. Their neighbours, community, friends, etc?
- Their thoughts on the Reserve...
- Co-management?